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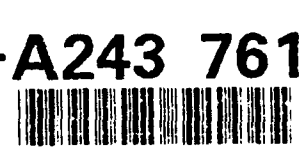

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Monterey, California

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NARCOTICS AND NATIONAL SECURITY:
REFINING THE MILITARY OPTION

by

Thomas J. Chassee
and
Michael M. Cobb

December, 1990

Thesis Advisor: David Winterford

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Narcotics and National Security: Refining the Military Option

by

Thomas J. Chassee
Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.A., Michigan State University, 1982

and

Michael M. Cobb
Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.S., Vanderbilt University, 1984

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN NATIONAL SECURITY AFFAIRS

From the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
December 1990

Authors: [redacted]
Thomas J. Chassee
[redacted]
Michael M. Cobb

Approved by: [redacted]
David Winterford, Thesis Advisor
[redacted]
Thomas C. Bruneau, Second Reader
[redacted]
Thomas C. Bruneau, Chairman
Department of National Security Affairs

ABSTRACT

A comprehensive study of the "Drug War" with particular emphasis on the increased role of the U.S. Military. Application of military force should be based on an understanding of the political, social and economic impact of Andean narcotrafficking. This thesis addresses these issues, evaluates current anti-narcotic strategies, and defines the most prudent use of military resources. Initially, the thesis highlights the Latin American drug connection and its impact on political instability, guerrilla insurgencies, corruption and respective economies. Based on this foundation, the "supply" and "demand" strategies of the United States are presented and evaluated. Finally, the thesis proposes limited usage of U.S. air and naval assets in support of law enforcement agencies, while minimizing exposure of in-country U.S. ground forces.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION 1

II. THE ACTORS AND THEIR EXPANDING ARENA 5

A. THE LATIN CONNECTION: PRINCIPLE ACTORS 6

1. Colombia 6

2. Mexico: "The Marijuana Border" 7

3. Bolivia 8

4. Peru 9

B. EXPANDING MARKETS: JAMAICA, BELIZE & THE TRANSIT STATES 11

1. Jamaica 12

2. Belize 13

3. The Transit States 13

C THE UNITED STATES: RELATIONS & POLICIES 14

D. DRUG TRAFFICKING & U.S. LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS: CASE STUDIES 17

1. Colombia 18

2. Mexico 20

3. Bolivia 21

4. Peru 22

E. U.S. BILATERAL NARCOTICS AGREEMENTS/TREATIES 23

F. SEARCHING FOR COMMON GROUND IN NARCOTICS CONTROL 25

III. NARCOTERRORISM, INSTABILITY & INSURGENCY 29

A. A BRIEF MILITARY ANALYSIS 32

B. THE THREAT 34

1. Peru 34

2. Colombia's Revolutionaries 38

3. Confusion In Bolivia 47
4. The Mexican Illusion 50
C. THE MILITARY DILEMMA: GUERRILLAS & NARCOTICS, PERU, COLOMBIA & BOLIVIA 52
1. The Drug War: Peru 52
2. The Drug War: Colombia 57
3. The Drug War: Bolivia 65
D. MILITARIZATION: THE POLITICAL DILEMMA 71

IV. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DRUG TRADE 76
A. MEXICO: A PYRRHIC VICTORY 76
B. THE DRUG TRADE MOVES TO THE ANDEAN REGION 81
C. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPPLY SIDE ERADICATION 88
D. U.S. STRATEGY PERCEPTIONS 94
E. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. STRATEGY 99

V. CURRENT "DRUG WAR" STRATEGY 102
A. THE NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY 105
1. Supply Side Specifics: 105
2. Interdiction 110
3. Demand Specifics 112
4. Assessment 115
B. THE MILITARY OPTION 119
C. CONGRESSIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY 121
1. Congressional Review 121
2 Current Legislation & Military Matters 125

VI. THE U.S. MILITARY IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT: RECENT TRENDS 128
A. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: A RELUCTANT ACTOR 128
B. OPERATION BLAST FURNACE 132
1. The Military Committed 134
2. Blast Furnace: An Assessmnet 139

C. LEO: THE MARTIME PERSPECTIVE....143
1. Maritime Interdiction: An Assessment....146
D. AIR INTERDICTION: THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY RESPONSE....150
1. Air Interdiction: An Assessment....153

VII. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS....156
A. ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS....157
B. POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS....158
C. ESCALATION CONSTRAINTS....161
D. GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTRAINTS....163

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST....171

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I. INTRODUCTION

As East-West tensions ease and each side cautiously withdraws from the rhetoric of the Cold War, more attention is being focused upon internal or domestic issues. Undoubtedly one of the major issues confronting the United States is that of narcotics. The issue itself is not new as the United States has historically attempted to control this disruptive domestic intruder. The nineteen eighties included greater emphasis on this problem and few would dispute that it has become one of the major issues for the nineteen nineties.

The "narcotics" problem is more than a political issue, although it has often been masked as one. It is an issue involving the basic erosion of society through a number of dimensions. The problem has been complicated, however, by short bursts of interest, lack of direction and the introduction of trendy terms such as "narcotrafficking," "crack," "drug lords," "drug war," the "Latin Connection," and a host of others that a mere decade ago were only familiar to drug enforcement personnel. Additional capitalization on the narcotics issue can be seen with television movies and series productions. In all this hype however, there remains a serious problem, the resolution of which has yet to be identified.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the narcotics problem as a national security issue and the feasibility of using the United States military in drug enforcement activities. As the drug problem continues to grow, the "military option" is being considered far more seriously by members of Congress, the administration and the American public. However, this option presents a number of problems and if not examined prudently could result in

complicating rather than reducing the problem. Consequently, this thesis will begin with an overview of the narcotics issue and conclude with a detailed examination of the military option and suggestions for its application.

Although many countries are involved in the production and trafficking of drugs this thesis will focus on the major players of Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia and Peru. Before analyzing the international dimension however, it is necessary to examine the critical impact of drugs on society.

In terms of consumption in the United States, Cocaine has become the major narcotic of concern. It is presently estimated that there are between 8-14 million regular cocaine users[1] in this country. The volume of the alkaloid entering the American market has expanded to between 54 and 74 tons as of 1987, more than doubling since the seventies. According to the Drug Enforcement Agencies annual Narcotics Intelligence Estimate, cocaine usage rose by 11 percent in 1988. Furthermore, the number of people with cocaine-related problems seeking admission to drug rehabilitation centers climbed by 600 percent from 1976-1981.[2] Latin America is the major actor when one considers that all the cocaine, 80 percent of the marijuana and one third of the heroin is supplied from this region. Needless to say the increased consumption rate of illegal substances by Americans has been the driving factor in the nation's drug eradication effort. However, in Latin America as well there is growing realization that consumption among their own people

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[1]MacDonald, S. B., *Dancing on a Volcano* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988), p. 2.

[2]Ibid., p. 3.

is on the increase. In Colombia, for example, there was a drastic increase in cocaine usage during the 1970's. This was due to inflation in the United States which resulted in decreased consumption by North Americans. Consequently, the cartels turned to the Colombian population for distribution of excess cocaine products. Drug usage by Latin Americans has been on the increase ever since.

The political implications of narcotrafficking are extremely volatile, particularly in Latin America where the stability of democracy constantly comes to question. MacDonald claims that many of the "drug lords" are not exagerating in their ability to pay off their countries' foreign debt. Consequently, the power of these "drug barons," in Latin America, is often underestimated by American officials. Furthermore, as this thesis attempts to indicate, one readily finds deep forms of corruption, alliance with revolutionary movements and even outright attempts at control of central governments by drug lords in Latin America.

As cocaine, marijuana and heroin, have increasingly become addictive among the social classes, so has it created an interest by governments, drug enforcement agencies, the military, the media and a host of other players. All are fascinated by the complexity, the amount of capital it generates, the characters involved and its overall implications. Between North and Latin America however, there has been a great deal of finger pointing and reluctance to examine the relationship between cause and effect. The Latin Americans tend to blame North Americans for their insatiable appetite for narcotics and in turn the North Americans tend to argue that if the Latin countries would cease in narcotic production and trafficking the problem

would be self eliminating. From the outset it can be seen that two different approaches are being applied to the same issue, one from the supply perspective and the other from the demand perspective.

In this introduction an attempt has been made to provide a brief indicator of the multifaceted complexity of the drug issue. In order to provide a basis for understanding the drug issue, and the implications for the use of military force for enforcement, the following vital subjects will now be analyzed in detail:

I. The Actors and their Expanding Arena
II. Narcoterrorism, Instability and Insurgency
III. The Economic Impact of the Drug Trade
IV. Current Strategies
V. The U.S. Military in Narcotics Enforcement: Recent Trends
VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

These subjects will serve to highlight the "narcotics issue" and each must be considered before the United States commits itself to a policy of increased military interdiction in the narcotics arena.

II. THE ACTORS AND THEIR EXPANDING ARENA

The United States has clearly demonstrated that the "war on drugs" is more than a political issue wrapped in rhetoric. Subsequently, since the issue has been likened to war, certainly the source of conflict has almost exclusively been isolated to four major Latin American countries. The administration has concentrated the majority of its efforts to counter narcotics production and trafficking in Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Mexico. Since all the cocaine and the majority of marijuana can be traced to these countries, the strategy appears in line with the perceived threat. Consequently, the four principle Latin American actors will be examined in some detail. However it should be noted that many other Latin American countries are expanding their narco markets as well. Incidentally, this has been attributed to the pressure being exerted by the United States on the main four. As a result of the flexibility of this market, the United States must be flexible in its strategy to counter the narcotics threat.

It would be misleading, as well, to focus attention on the principle actors without shedding some light on the multidimensional stage on which they perform. The "drug problem" is being felt in areas other than society and the governmental enforcement agencies. As efforts to battle the problem mount, effects are being seen in foreign policy decision making and in multilateral relations throughout the Latin American region. The "war on drugs" has become far more than the simple matter of right and wrong or good versus bad. The United States federal budget, and related programs, the media, judicial system and the average citizen, have all become springboards for this

social issue of the nineties. Consequently, we begin our chapter with an examination of these complicated elements.

A. THE LATIN CONNECTION: PRINCIPLE ACTORS

1. Colombia

Colombia has been described by Scott B. MacDonald, in Dancing On A Volcano, as the "core of the volcano" and the "kingpin" of the narcotrafficking countries. It is the Medellin cartel and their guerrilla allies that have professionalized the drug trade to the point of being compared to the activities of a nation-state. The technology and capital available to the members of the cartel are without parallel even in the more legitimate corporate activities of the business world.

> .....they have created transnational trade networks, established trading posts, such as Miami and New York City and when challenged, have demonstrated that they are capable of assassinations, bribery of *international officials, and full-scale military assaults.*[3]

The in-country Colombia network has been expanded to include M-19 guerrillas of Marxist-Leninist ideology. At first glance this alliance appears contradictory, yet for the protection and assault capability of the guerrillas, the drug cartel pays enormous fees. This capital is in turn used to finance the leftist movement within the Colombian political arena. The cartel and their alliance have chosen Colombia as the drug capital of Latin America, a capital from which the United States reportedly receives all of its

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[3]Ibid. p. 28

imported cocaine. According to MacDonald Colombia is the logical capital for four basic reasons.

1. geopolitical position. It is strategically located between Bolivia and Peru and has controlled access to the Caribbean and Central America.
2. the vast central forests, excellent for concealing clandestine operations.
3. the entrepreneurial skills of the Colombian people.
4. the willingness of elements of the Colombian community in the United States to provide access to markets.[4]

It has been recognized by all involved, on both sides of the law, that Colombia is without question the controlling country in the narcotrafficking process.

2. Mexico: "The Marijuana Border"

Mexico, because its lengthy border with the United States, about 1900 miles, has always enjoyed the benefit of smuggling with ease. The commodities of choice, at least among narcotics, includes marijuana, cocaine and heroin. Whereas the Colombians maintain the corner on the cocaine market, Mexico provides the United States with 80 percent of its marijuana. Additionally the Mexican dealers assist the Colombians in the delivery of cocaine when other routes prove to be too costly, as in periods of sporadic crackdowns by the United States and other regional governments. The overland route through Mexico is more expensive, but less risky.

Mexico has increased its monopoly on marijuana as other Latin countries moved to more compact, transportable items. The growing conditions are ideal and the bulky product is easily moved across the border.

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[4]Ibid., p. 29.

Despite the fact the Mexico controls the marijuana market, many of Mexico's most powerful drug lords maintain subservience to the Colombian cartels. Along the border in Mexico there also exists a sub-culture of border smugglers who function as messengers for drug lords throughout Latin America.

While poor people in Southern Mexico and in other Latin countries turned to the political left, the people of the border turned capitalist and cynical. [According to one member of this culture] All the United States is to Mexico is a rich, fat whore who wants to be plundered.[5]

Clearly Mexico is more than a transit state for narcotrafficking. It dominates the market for marijuana production and delivery and extensive ties have developed to drug dealers in other source countries. However even the marijuana traffickers must inform Colombian drug lords, through a series of messengers, as to their move.

3. Bolivia

Bolivia is one of the major coca leaf producers in the world and it is estimated that coca crops yield about $3 billion per annum. Five tons of coca paste are shipped to Colombia every week for refinement and processing. The attractiveness of Bolivia to narcotrafficking is apparent as Bolivia has traditionally lacked a high degree of political stability and has had close to 200 coups since its independence from Spain in 1821. MacDonald attributes four main reasons for the development of the contemporary Bolivian drug industry.

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[5]Shannon, E., *Desperados: Latin Drug Lords, U.S. Lawmen, and the War America Can't Win*, (New York: Viking Press, 1988), p. 46.

1. the longstanding weakness of the political center vis-a-vis the periphery.
2. the existence of a traditional coca industry which has cultural significance for the Indian part of the population.
3. developments in the economy following the 1952 revolution.
4. increased international demand for cocaine.[6]

Bolivia's role in the drug industry increased exponentially in the 1980's primarily as a result of the "cocaine coup" of July 17, 1980. The next five years were highlighted by the rule and influence of the "cocaine generals" who succeeded in destroying Bolivia's legal economy and adding to the corruption and confusion characterizing the central government. In 1985 Bolivia returned to democratic rule under Victor Paz and in 1986 the United States provided the Bolivian government with military personnel to assist in the eradication of the cocaine processing and transportation problem. Despite these efforts the results were only temporary, once the program had reached its conclusion the cultivation and trafficking process rapidly resumed. Bolivia remains a major producer of cocaine and continues as Colombia's major supplier.

4. Peru

In Peru, as with Colombia and Bolivia, cocaine and coca exports have pushed aside the traditional commodities and are now the major exports for the country. The drug network is very similar to the ones previously described, however in Peru there exists a subtle difference. Coca use has

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[6]MacDonald, S. B., *Dancing on a Volcano* (New York: Praeger Publishers, 1988), p. 52.

historically been practiced by the native Indians of Peru and its modern cultivation is not seen as a moral question. Not only does the growth of coca provide economic benefits, it also remains a socially acceptable practice. Additionally, the Peruvian peasants, scattered throughout the countryside, have suffered discrimination from the central government. Consequently they feel independent with little allegiance to the government structures of Peru. The drug matter is further complicated in Peru with the presence of Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path). These particularly violent leftist guerrillas have worked in concert with the narcotraffickers when doing so means rebellion against the central government. Former President Alan Garcia has acted against these narcotraffickers but it would seem more out of fear for the growing threat of the Shining Path. As the efforts of the Peruvian government increased, the extent of the narcotics problem became fully realized.

In August 1985, Garcia sent Peruvian troops into the Amazon jungle to hit the trafficker's border sanctuaries. At the same time, Colombian forces moved into their side of the frontier, squeezing the traffickers in a pincer movement. Operation Condor, as the Peruvian foray was called,was a military success, but it also demonstrated that the Peruvian cocaine-refining industry was far more advanced than had been ever imagined.[7]

The purpose of the previous section is to briefly highlight the complexity of the narcotrafficking issue among the four major players. Not

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[7]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 366.

nearly enough has been said about the internal affairs and less is known about the "cross-border relationships," but it does give flavor to the problems yet to be explored. Chapter II of this thesis will examine the internal complications of these actors in much more detail.

B. EXPANDING MARKETS: JAMAICA, BELIZE & THE TRANSIT STATES

Cocaine is the major target of concern for the anti-narcotics campaign. This is because it is seen as an enormous threat to the welfare and stability of North American society. Consequently the focus of the "war on drugs" has predominantly been limited to the four major cocaine producing and transporting countries. However, marijuana, and other illegal narcotics, have their markets and origins spread throughout the Caribbean, South America and Central America. The role of these smaller actors merits a brief discussion since these markets have grown at an exponential rate, and since they contribute to the overall complexity of the narcotics issue. Moreover, "balloon-type" affects result from the pressures being applied by the various law enforcement agencies and the United States government. This concept was explained by DEA agent Bob McGuire. In other words, as pressure is applied to Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia and Peru, either by their respective governments or by the United States, the market and transit routes are temporarily shifted to another area. Therefore it would erroneously appear

that production and trafficking are in decline: in fact the operation has just been transported to another country such as Venezuela or Brazil.[8]

This "balloon-effect" makes enforcement and intelligence gathering much more difficult and emphasizes the need for flexibility in the current strategies of the drug fighting countries.

Add to the ballooning affect the growing markets of the less significant actors and the drug trade begins to reveal itself as a much broader problem. Other actors are examined here to illustrate this point.

1. **Jamaica**

Marijuana, referred to as Ganja, has become a major part of the Jamaican way of life. Many have attributed this to the influence and practices of the Rastafarians who condone the use of ganja and delight in the chaos it creates among the "white" class. The Jamaican government has blamed and acted against the Rastafarians since 1961, but the growth and export of marijuana has increased many times over. Today marijuana is Jamaica's largest export, is transported almost exclusively to the Unites States and has contributed enormous sums of "narcodollars" to the Jamaican economy.

In the 1978-81 period, the DEA estimated that an average of 740-1,400 metric tons of marijuana were supplied to the U.S. market by Jamaica. By the 1980's cannabis had become the leading income earner for at least 6,000 Jamaican farmers, and, according to one estimate, in 1982 there was a total of

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[8]Interview with DEA agent Bob McGuire on March 16, 1990, (San Francisco Regional DEA Office, U.S. Federal Building, San Francisco, CA). Discussions of *balloon effect* being seen throughout Latin America.

19,000 acres under cultivation. As of 1985, the cannabis "narcodollar" contributed between $1 to $2 billion to the island's foreign exchange earnings, more than all the other exports combined.[9]

The cultivation and trafficking of marijuana in Jamaica, however, is not the result of Rastafarian culture alone, but rather elements of organized crime from the United States. The DEA, Coast Guard and the FBI are all aware of the organized crime connections but have had little success in controlling the growth of the ganja market, especially with the emphasis being channeled so heavily on the cocaine and heroine element.

2. Belize

Marijuana cultivation has been popular in Belize since 1960 and has largely been managed and controlled by North Americans. This small country with a population of around 168,000 has found it difficult to actively combat the narcotrafficking problem. However Belize officials have appeased the United States on several occasions by allowing crop eradication through the use of pesticides. The last attempt, 1982-83, enraged the indigenous population as much of the arable land was damaged and surrounding food crops poisoned. The program was controversial but effective, however, the United States left Belize as quickly as it came. Naturally, with the pressure off, Belize once again attracted marijuana growers and now has been adopted as a transit stopover point for the shipping of Colombian cocaine. Belize continues to fade in and out of the narcotrafficking picture, perhaps because

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[9]U..S. Department of Justice, Drug Enforcement Agency, *Drugs of Abuse: 1989 Edition*, (Washington, DC, U.S. Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 45.

of its small size and relative insignificance. Although the jungles of Belize, her isolated airstrips and the proximity to the United States still serve as a warning that Belize too must be considered in the multidimensional narcosphere.

3. The Transit States

As a whole the transit states should be viewed as a collection of smaller actors who, when standing alone, are a mere nuisance to anti-narcotrafficking activities. Unfortunately it is in this light that current strategies are being formed. Together these transit states, which include the entire Caribbean and most of Central America, supply pit stops to traffickers and provide an elaborate money laundering nexus.

The transit states are an important element in the Latin American drug trade. Without the use of the Caribbean's and Central America's bases, penetration of the United States and Canadian markets would be much more difficult. In addition to functions as pit stops to the Colombian's, the Caribbean populations are increasingly able to provide networks of friends and family in North America.[10]

One would assume, based on the strategy of the United States government and the explosive media coverage, that the "war on drugs" is exclusively limited to Colombia, Mexico, Peru and Bolivia. Little coverage and effort has been channeled to the smaller players and/or transit states. Albeit the major supply of cocaine, heroine and marijuana can be traced to

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[10]Mabry, D. J., Ed., *The Latin American Narcotics Trade and U.S. National Security*, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), p. 36.

the principle four, the significance of the smaller actors should not be underestimated. The narcotrafficking problem may have its heart in Colombia, but its influence can be felt throughout the Western Hemisphere. This dimension of narcotrafficking must be factored into any strategy, especially involving the military, designed to reduce the narcotic threat to society.

C THE UNITED STATES: RELATIONS & POLICIES

The United States has responded to the "narcotrafficking" problem with the establishment of policies and the broadening of powers for the various agencies involved. The "policy" from Washington is itself quite generic and difficult to fully define. Reasons for this can be attributed to the sensitivity of the issue within our country and the sensitivity of the issue in relation to other agreements and transactions with Latin America. However, American policy is essentially broken down into a two pronged anti-production and anti-consumption approach. The first encompasses the elimination of the drugs themselves before they reach the borders of the United States. This approach involves such groups as the Agency for International Development (AID), the State Department's Bureau of International Narcotic Matters (INM), and by international agencies such as the United Nations Fund for Drug Abuse Control (UNFDAC). The second policy approach includes the elimination of drug traffickers. This approach is serviced by enforcement contingencies such as the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA), the United States Coast Guard and other military groups and law enforcement officials working on the periphery. It is the second approach that has received the most attention and the most effort. Latin American governments are far more

receptive to requests for cooperation against traffickers as opposed to producers, as they see the apprehension of traffickers as more closely tied to their own conception of national interest.

To begin with, apprehending traffickers is an indirect way of drying up the demand for farmer's illegitimate produce without directly incurring their political wrath. Secondly, although the trafficker targets may be harder to identify than the producers, they are fewer in number and often foreigners who are less significant politically. Thirdly, while production of opium, coca and marijuana is often legal, or officially tolerated, in many countries, trafficking in those products is clearly not.[11]

An additional reason for foreign governments to approve of this latter approach is the desire to maintain a sense of control over their own population. These governments have a vested interest in preventing any individual or group from attaining such power that it can challenge governmental authority.

On occasion, such individuals or groups are politically or ideologically motivated and trafficking in drugs to gain revenues with which to buy weapons and support.[12]

Nonetheless the obstacles to even anti-trafficking approaches can not be underestimated. Although it became apparent, particularly in the 1980's that anti-trafficking practices are more acceptable to foreign governments, there is

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[11]Nadelman, Ethan A., "International Drug Trafficking and U.S. Foreign Policy," *The Washington Quarterly*, (Fall 1985; v. 8, no. 4.), p. 88.

[12]Ibid., p. 89.

still a fundamental reluctance to give full support. This reluctance is in part due to the deep involvement of officials in various governments in the trafficking business. This involvement received international attention with the disappearance of DEA agent Enrique Camarena in February of 1985. The Mexican government, although working closely with the United States in anti-narcotics trafficking, did little to shed light on the murder of this agent. Resulting investigations would trace corruption from the local police to high ranking government officials in Mexico City. Even in this country obstacles were met within the Reagan administration due to the sensitivity of U.S./Mexican relations in other areas.[13]

Evaluation of current U.S. policy approaches is a bit disheartening. Given the demand for illicit drugs in this country the United States government has been unable to stop the flow. Despite the increased law enforcement efforts and the bilateral agreements with the source countries, the supplies of heroin, cocaine and marijuana have been little affected. The problem of current foreign policy objectives in the drug effort is not in the approaches but rather in the inconsistency in which these approaches are utilized. It is clear that the United States government has identified this issue as an objective of policy making but the bureaucracy has yet to catch up to its relative importance. Other foreign policy objectives clearly dominate the policy arena including the stability of otherwise friendly regimes. The frustration of spontaneous reactions, and contradictory policies are not unique to the drug issue

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[13]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 39.

however, this problem plagues the entire U.S. policy making process. If the drug issue remains an objective of the United States government and withstands the test of time, perhaps more cohesion will be obtained. Currently the narcotics issue is important but remains subservient to other long-range objectives.

D. DRUG TRAFFICKING & U.S. LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS: CASE STUDIES

In President Bush's *National Drug Control Strategy* released in September of 1989, the following were listed as international objectives:

"• Elevation of drugs as a bilateral foreign policy issue.

- U.S. ratification of the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffick in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances, along with other pending Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties. Other nations will be urged to ratify the Convention.
- Support for the U.S. foreign aid certification process in order to achieve more effective supply--and transit--country compliance with American drug control objectives.
- Bilateral and multilateral efforts against international money laundering activities."[14]

The President's statements indicate the central importance of the relationship between the United States and Latin America in a coherent drug strategy. Although the impact can be felt throughout Latin America, the four predominant source countries will be discussed. Indeed many of the same characteristics can be found throughout the relations with other players but

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[14]The White House, *National Drug Control Strategy*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, September 1989), p. 60.

Colombia, Mexico, Bolivia and Peru have certainly received the most attention.

1. Colombia

The Colombian government has found itself in a very uncomfortable position. Whereas the desire to act against the traffickers is currently on the government's agenda, such actions have resulted in extremely violent reaction. Recent activity on the part of the Colombian military has been met with assassination, kidnapping and bombing of public buildings. As a consequence one might consider their efforts to be less than enthusiastic. However it is not the Colombian's repulsion of violence preventing action, but rather the degree to which legitimate institutions have been infiltrated by the narcotraffickers. In this context the relationship between the United States and Colombia has experienced a number of levels ranging from apathetic distrust to mutual crusades. Colombia became identified as the drug king in the 1970's and has been unable to stop the escalation of this image. This image was largely created by the United States, and the Colombians are naturally resentful of this fact. In addition it has been difficult to convince the Colombian government that a concerted effort on their part is first and foremost in their nation's best interest. The tendency of Washington to dictate policy and agenda items is greatly resented by the Colombian government. This resentment is still present as Colombia feels that the United States approaches these issues from the standpoint that Colombia's government is basically incompetent. In 1979 a GAO study on drug control in South America singled out the corruption in the Colombian government as a major cause of the massive trafficking problem. Moreover a CBS 60 minutes

report, of the same year, accused several Colombian presidential hopefuls as being narcotraffickers.[15] Needless to say the tarnish of these incidents, and several like them, has yet to be polished away. Recently the relationship between Colombia and the United States has been on the upswing. This has been largely due to the efforts of the Reagan and Bush Administrations. The approach by the United States is changing from dictation of policy to cooperative efforts with Colombian officials.

The events of the past year seem to indicate Colombia's recognition of the drug problem, and the willingness of Colombian officials to work for its eradication. Respecting the sovereignty of Colombia and working with this country as a peer has done much to relieve previous tensions. Colombians have far more to lose in the war on drugs than do North American citizens. This is evident with the recent political assassinations and the knowledge that their economy is heavily dependent on the capital received from narcotrafficking.[16]

2. Mexico

Traffick in illicit narcotics has been a crucial factor in Mexico-U.S. relations since 1960. Until the mid nineteen eighties the relationship, at least on this issue, has been favorable. Both governments agreed on the need to curtail narcotrafficking and worked closely on cooperative agreements. Prior

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[15]Craig, R. B., "Colombian Narcotics and United States Relations," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, (August 1981 v. 23, no. 3), p. 252.

[16]Lee, R. W. L, III, "The Latin American Drug Connection," *Foreign Policy*, (Winter 1985-1986, no. 61), p. 147.

to 1985 the only real stalemate occurred over the desire of the United States to use herbicides in crop eradication. The reluctance on the part of Mexico was due to possible side effects of the chemicals and the general outrage at this idea by the Mexican people. However this was approached by both governments and the result was Operation Condor. Nothing before or since Condor has had such an impact on the Mexican drug scene and so pleased the United States. Condor was designed to please all participants:

"• Enthusiastic support by the Mexican Justice Department.

- A firm commitment from the Secretary of Defence [Mexico] who was supplied with an airwing, from the U.S., larger than available to most Latin American countries.
- Unprecedented coordination between the Mexican Federal Police, the military and U.S. narcotics officials."[17]

The results of the above cooperative effort were enormous but its success was soon forgotten as other more pressing matters such as the foreign debt and immigration began to occupy the agenda of both countries. Bilateral relations suffered quite a blow when the Camarena case attracted so much attention. Although President Salinas and President Bush have discussed increased coordination efforts between the two governments, the tone of this effort reached an all time low with the January 1990 NBC airing of the "Kiki Camarena Story." This pseudo documentary cast a broad shadow of corruption on the Mexican government and was severely criticized for its insensitivity by many Mexican officials. The problem was further aggravated when an official request by the Mexican government not to air this movie

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[17]Craig, R. B., "Illicit Drug Traffic and U.S.–Latin American Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Fall 1985, v. 8, no. 4), p. 119.

was unequivocally denied. Although the United States and Mexico are still discussing future possible coordinated efforts, J. J. Mateer of the San Francisco DEA states that it may well take some time for the wounds to heal.[18]

3. Bolivia

The governments of Bolivia and the United States have worked closely to control narcotrafficking. Bolivia has been responsive to American policy goals and quite willing to assist in efforts to curtail cocaine production. However the government has suffered from past corruption, as with the "cocaine generals," and in Bolivia, the central government loses effectiveness as the distance from La Paz increases. Political-economic chaos in Bolivia presents the biggest obstacle to a serious anti-drug program. The institutions and government of Bolivia are attempting to reorganize and are willing to continue cooperative efforts with the United States, despite past confrontations with narcotraffickers. When governments feel threatened by the drug problem they are willing to react.

A recent joint effort occurred in July of 1986 when U.S. military personnel and equipment were sent to Bolivia to aid in the fight against processing and transportation of cocaine.[19]

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[18]Discussion on March 16, 1990 with DEA Regional Director J. J. Mateer on U.S./Mexican relations in regards to narcotics enforcement. (San Francisco Regional DEA Office, U.S. Federal Building, San Francisco, DA).

[19]MacDonald, *Volcano*, p. 60.

In effect this could be viewed as direct military intervention. The results were gratifying but short lived. Once again after limited success both governments moved on to more pressing matters.

4. **Peru**

Peruvian officials have long been suspicious of the "imperialistic" intentions of the United States. The Alan Garcia administration recognized the threat of drugs and narcotraffickers to his country but was also gravely concerned with the objectives of the guerrilla Sendero movement. However he tried to go at his many battles alone and was lukewarm to the courtship of aid from the United States. Unfortunately this trend continues under the new administration. Additionally, as highlighted before, the military, the police and the guerrilla's all have different objectives, which only occasionally touch upon the drug issue. The complexity of this web is significant and often underestimated and it is in Peru where the United States has the least influence. Although drugs are recognized as a threat:

Garcia governs an economic basket case, a poverty stricken country plagued by political instability, a restless military and a deadly serious revolutionary group.[20]

Realistically former President Garcia's agenda included many other more pressing problems, problems which remain a concern for Peru's new government.

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[20]Craig, R. B., "Illicit Drug Traffic and U.S.–Latin American Relations", *The Washington Quarterly*, (Fall 1985, v. 8, no. 4), p. 110.

The recent "drug summit," conducted on 13 February 1990 in Cartagena Colombia, was attended by government officials of the Andean region and by President Bush. This summit has shown a willingness on the part of the United States to recognize the sovereignty of these nations and that the drug issue, although important to the United States, is only one problem on the agenda of these other countries. From this summit it was decided that efforts will be more coordinated, mutually beneficial and will not, in the near future, include the use of the military.

E. U.S. BILATERAL NARCOTICS AGREEMENTS/TREATIES

Due to the need for diplomatic discussion and an agency qualified to initiate and formalize these discussions, the Bureau of Narcotics Matters was created in February of 1980. This Bureau falls under the jurisdiction of the State Department and has worked since its inception to formalize international treaties and agreements for narcotics matters. Congress, as well, has its fact finding body, the Task Force In International Narcotics Control (INC). In reviewing the 600 page report from the INC, dated August 1986, ambiguity of the treaties enclosed stands apparent.[21] For example, in Colombia several agreements exist with the purpose of eradicating crop production and acting more aggressively in the pursuit of narcotraffickers. The only other major agreement is the Extradition Treaty of 1982, which allows for the deportation of Colombian nationals, suspected of drug

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[21]U.S. Department of State, *Treaties in Force: A List of Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States in Force on 1 January 1986, Section D*, p. 332.

trafficking, to be tried in the United States.[22] From early 1980 to 1989 little existed in the way of combined international strategy. In October 1989 military equipment in the form of helicopters, land vehicles and small arms were distributed to Colombia with additional capital to be allocated at a later date. Similar transactions have taken place throughout the "drug source region."

All major "drug source" countries in Latin America have agreements with the United States concerning the insertion of DEA agents and special military units. The degree of mobility in which these individuals may operate varies from country to country. As of 1989, all may now carry firearms for self defence, but none have arresting powers. The jobs of these units are loosely defined but include training and intelligence assistance. Arrests must be made in the presence of local law enforcement agencies.[23] Mexico has perhaps the largest number of agreements with the United States and has entertained U.S. law enforcement officials since 1960. However even in Mexico their powers are severely limited.

After reviewing the data it became apparent that the majority of agreements comprised one-time operations, and have not as yet addressed the more sensitive issues of jurisdiction and arresting powers. This in part is

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[22]International Legal Matters, *Colombian Supreme Court Decision on the Extradition Treaty with United States*, (March 1988, v. XXVII, no. 2).

[23]Interview with DEA agent Bob McGuire on March 16, 1990, (San Francisco Regional DEA Office, U.S. Federal Building, San Francisco, CA).

based upon the mutual distrust that is still prevalent among all actors involved.

F. SEARCHING FOR COMMON GROUND IN NARCOTICS CONTROL

The current problem with the control of narcotic trafficking is multifaceted, but the majority of sources consulted seem to agree that a supply side attack has simply not been effective. The reasons for this include:

- Supply side strategies, even if temporarily successful in one country, will not much reduce the supply of cocaine in the United States; growing and trafficking simply move elsewhere.
- Because coca-cultivation for local consumption of the leaf has been traditional and legal for centuries the cocoa growers there are well organized to defend their interests through legitimate political channels.
- There has not been a realistic evaluation of the political, security, and social costs to the countries of programs aimed at the farmers who cultivate the coca leaf.[24]

Although coordination between the involved countries has certainly improved over the years, the limited results are indicated by the exponential rise of the drug problem. According to a recent Rand Corporation study, arrests and sentences are up and seizures of drugs have reached record levels. Despite this, the market prices of imported drugs (particularly cocaine) have fallen. In standard economic models this either means that demand has decreased sharply or that more drugs are reaching the market. Ample direct evidence suggests that demand is not dwindling, and indirect evidence

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[24]Treverton, G. F., "Combatting Cocaine in the Supplying Countries: Challenges and Strategies," *World Peace Foundation Report*, (May 1989), pp. 3-4.

indicates that quantities shipped have increased even more than seizures have.[25]

As Washington increases its efforts on the supply side of the drug war, Latin America responds with less and less enthusiasm. Again this goes back to the finger pointing of who is to blame, and which method is best to fight the drug war. Latin American cynics argue that it is politically easier for Washington to fight the drug war abroad than it is at home. Additionally there is skepticism in Latin America about the enthusiasm in which American officials approach the issue, considering, for example, that marijuana is the number two cash crop in the United States. The rhetoric of Washington, the lukewarm attitude of Latin America and the corruption that runs throughout, makes it extremely difficult and dangerous for those who actually serve as the foot soldiers. Both Latin American and U.S. enforcement officials are frustrated with the inconsistency and ambiguity of their respective government policies. If in fact a consensus were reached to fight this "war" from the supply side then certainly more of an effort must be generated. Our conclusion is taking the drug war abroad was in fact the easier of the two possible strategies. Even within the United States enforcement and judicial proceedings have become very difficult. It should be obvious that efforts must be increased both in the war at home and the war abroad.

Credit must be given to the governments of all concerned however, because increased consolidation of efforts are apparent. Agencies have been

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[25]Cave, J. A. K., *Remarks on Recent Elements of Drug Policy*, (The Rand Corporation, May 1988), p. 2.

created, studies have been funded and a more cooperative attitude among the players can be seen. How much each country is willing to devote to the problem of narcotics control remains to be seen, but if it in fact becomes the agenda item of the nineties, more definite guidelines must be developed.

Cooperation between the United States and Latin America, on narcotics issues, has improved considerably in recent years. Isolated incidents have added stress to the relationship but cooperative efforts will continue to expand and improve because each needs the other's help. Rhetoric notwithstanding, Latin American leaders now realize as never before that narcotraffick and all that it implies represents a threat to existing political systems. Bolivia and Colombia afford exemplary case studies. Furthermore, drug abuse is no longer a U.S. monopoly. It is a universal reality that is growing most rapidly in source countries where surplus heroin, coca derivatives, and marijuana are flooding local markets. In the long run however Latin America's drug abuse and production problems will require future administrations to address their domestic raison d'etre.

The narcotraffickers have been extremely successful in expanding their arena of operations and enlisting the aid of many throughout the cultivation-production-trafficking network. Recognition of these complexities will serve as a foundation for the development of more successful strategies.

III. NARCOTERRORISM, INSTABILITY & INSURGENCY

It might be considered a bit extreme to identify the narcotics problem as a threat to national security, as President Reagan did on April 8, 1986 when he signed a national security directive designating the drug trade as a national security issue. However, if one is to take the definition of national security and compare it with the existing drug threat, the viability of the argument becomes apparent. According to Mabry, national security includes "protection of vital economic and political interests, the loss of which could threaten fundamental values and the vitality of the state."[26] Keeping this definition in mind recall that the United States has a $100 billion illicit drug appetite by 23 million of its people.[27] This must eventually translate into lower productivity, an erosion of social values, especially among the children, more frequent accidents resulting in the loss of property and life, an exponential increase in violent crime, and the loss of economic resources through non-returnable investment. The threat of the narcotics trade on the national security of the United States is real indeed and if not arrested will cause more damage, in the long run, than the crisis of the moment whether it be Panama, Iraq or the perception of any threat. Since the threat of narcotics does not

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[26]Mabry, *Narcotics and National Security*, p. 1.

[27]The White House, *National Drug Control Strategy*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, September 1989), p. 1. NOTE: Estimates based on usage at least once in a thirty day period, in other words some form of illegal drug usage once a month.

immediately affect the survival of the United States, the tendency is to refrain from a full attack on the problem. Note that there has been little mention of the "war on drugs" throughout the Middle East crisis which began in August of 1990. Granted the threat posed by the Middle East is more immediate, but it is unnerving to think that the biggest threat previous to this crisis has all but been forgotten by the government, the media, and to a large extent, the citizens.

The domestic turbulence caused by the narcotics trade is only one part of the overall threat to national security. The biggest and most immediate threat is the affect that narcotrafficking is having on regional political and economic stability. Instability of this type is certainly not unheard of in Latin America but the problem is compounded with the growth of the narcotics nexus.

Therefore the threat is obviously not limited to the national security of the United States but to the region and the individual countries involved.

It is the habit of the United States government to focus on immediate threats and causes of instability, especially in the Western hemisphere. Insomuch as this is the trend it warrants an overview of the conditions in the principle narco-producing countries. Certainly from the view of the principle actors, narcotrafficking is seen as an immediate threat to the legitimacy and effectiveness of their respective governments. The extent to which narcotrafficking promotes instability in Latin America is enormous and it occurs at all levels. Corruption exists in government and the military, criminal elements are massing incredible economic power bases, and the people, as a rule, have found that although cultivation and production are

illegal, it is more of a benefit to the welfare of their family than former enterprises. Comparatively speaking the political and destabilizing affect of the narcotics trade is far more serious in Latin America than the United States. This is no great revelation, however, it must be realized that regional instability and gradual domestic erosion are in themselves a threat to the national security of the United States.

The focus will now shift to the political threats and seeds of instability that are readily identified in Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Mexico. In these countries the threat of narcotics is not from domestic consumption but rather from the cultivation, production and trafficking elements. However this is not to suggest that the political threat is limited to these four countries or that the United States is excluded from the picture. On the contrary the entire Western hemisphere has been affected in one way or another, and the fact has been illustrated that regional instability poses another element of danger to all the actors involved.

Instability and political threats have been fueled through the use of narcoterrorism and to a lesser degree, insurgency. These catalysts have dealt a firm blow to the efforts of governments and the arms of narcotics enforcement. Insurgency and terrorism are not new concepts, especially in Latin America, and the narcotraffickers have adapted these tactics to undermine legitimate power bases and discourage competition. At the outset it should be clearly pointed out that insurgents, although contributing to the chaos on an occasional basis, can not be linked directly to any narco movement. The few cooperative efforts noted in the past have been purely out of mutual convenience. The degrees to which insurgency and

narcoterrorism are used differ from case to case, but undoubtedly Colombia tops the list. This in part is due to her history of violence and the fact that the major cartels operate from within her boundaries.

In encouraging the Andean nations in their fight against narcotics, the U.S. has advocated a militarization of the drug war. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the implications of militarization for the countries of the Andean Region. It will concentrate on the dilemmas faced by the Andean military and law enforcement institutions, as well as the dilemma faced by the governments of the region as they attempt or resist a militarization of the drug war. It will also present an assessment concerning the variety of threats faced by security forces and the capabilities of Andean military establishments in addressing these threats.

A. A BRIEF MILITARY ANALYSIS

Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru are confronted by a variety of obstacles that stand in the way of a successful drug interdiction campaign. The first and perhaps the most basic is geography. The region in which the various anti-narcotics forces must operate is extremely arduous. Colombia, the main processing center of coca paste into its final stage of cocaine hydrochloride, is a large country with rugged terrain. Colombia has three major mountain ranges which run its length, as well as heavy rain forest intersected by river networks along its border with Peru, and Brazil.[28] In addition the narco-

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[28]Trainor, B. E., "A Hard War for Colombia," *New York Times*, 20 October 1989.

traffickers have legitimately purchased over 2.5 million acres of Colombian farmland.[29] There has been a trend away from the large centralized processing laboratories, towards the smaller so called "kitchen sink" labs. Given the amount of acreage to be covered, the task of the Colombian anti-narcotics forces is a formidable one.

Peru and Bolivia present a different set of circumstances. Both of these countries are primarily growers of coca leaf and process it only into a crude paste for shipment to Colombia. The primary growing areas in both countries are well known: in Peru the upper-Huallaga valley, and in Bolivia the Chapare River region. Still the areas under cultivation are quite large, Bolivia having approximately 120,000 acres and Peru 250,000 acres under coca cultivation.[30] As in Colombia, the growing areas in both Peru and Bolivia are rugged and present logistical and operational difficulties for government anti-narcotics forces.

Another factor that significantly complicates the interdiction effort is the presence of indigenous resistance groups in both Colombia and Peru. Peru must contend with the most serious guerilla threat in Latin America, the Sendero Luminoso (Shining Path) movement, as well as a lesser threat

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[29]Collett, M., "The Cocaine Connection: Drug Trafficking and Inter-American Relations," (New York: Headline Series, Foreign Policy Association, Fall 1989), p. 15.

[30]Painter, J., "Bolivia Seeks U.S. Aid to Strengthen its Economy," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 February 1990. U.S. Department of State Bureau of International Narcotics Matters (USDS-BINM) (1988) *International Narcotics Control Strategy Report (March)*, Washington: U.S.-D.S.-BINM.

from the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Front (MRTA). Colombia, in addition to having to contend with narco-terrorists, must also struggle with five major revolutionary movements, the most serious being the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces or FARC, as well as approximately 130 paramilitary groups.[31]

Bolivia is the only country of the Andean coca producers that is not threatened by a serious revolutionary guerilla movement. The complicating factor in Bolivia is its peasant coca growers association, organized under the Associacion Nacional de Productores de Coca (ANAPCOCA).[32] As discussed later in this chapter, this peasant organization has been effective in resisting eradication efforts.

B. THE THREAT

1. Peru

Peru is primarily a coca leaf producer, providing approximately 55-60 percent of the World supply.[33] (Note Figure 1) Peru does not possess any significant drug cartels threatening the legitimacy of its government, as is the case in Colombia. What Peru does have is the Sendero Luminoso insurgency

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[31]Youngers, C., "Colombia Military's Link with Drug Dealers," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1989.

[32]Healy, K., "Coca, the State, and the Peasantry in Bolivia," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, v. 30, (Summer/Fall 1988), p. 109.

[33]Riding, A., "Peru's Forces Press Ahead in Drug War," *New York Times*, August 17, 1986, p. A12.

movement, headed by the self proclaimed fourth sword of Marxism, Abamail Guzman.

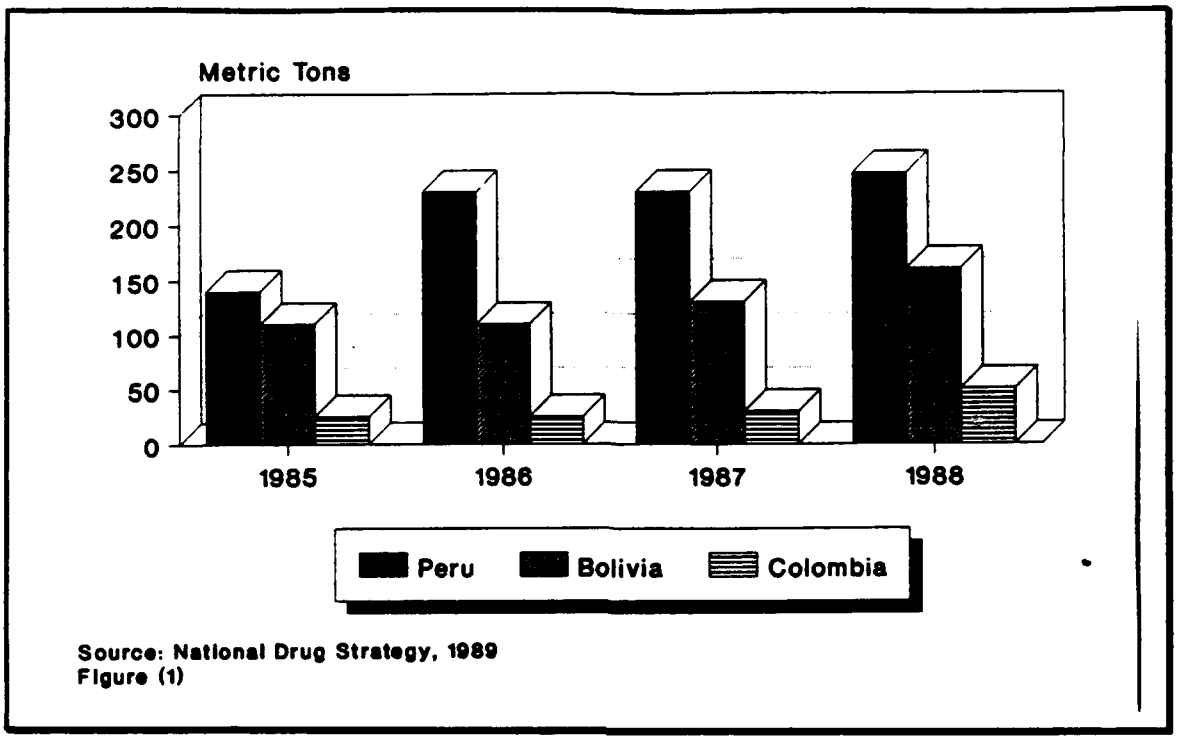

Figure 1. Estimated Coca Leaf Production. The Andean Countries, 1985-1988

Sendero is one of two insurgent movements in the Andean region that is currently involved in the drug trade.[34] Its area of operations is the upper-Huallaga valley, Peru's primary coca growing region. Though it is doubtful that Sendero has formed a formal alliance with drug traffickers in the Upper-Huallaga valley, there is no doubt that they are helping the coca

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[34]The other insurgent group is the Colombia Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC). Colombia's M-19 guerrillas had alleged links to Colombian narcotraficantes but they have since disbanded and entered the realm of legitimate politics.

growers of the region in their dealings with drug traffickers. In turn Sendero finances its insurgent operations by collecting a 5 to 10 percent tax on the growers coca crop, and charges traffickers $5,000 dollars per flight of coca paste. This equates to an estimated yearly income of between $20 and $30 million.[35]

Sendero was founded in 1970 by Guzman, then a professor of philosophy at the National University of San Cristobal de Huamanga in Ayacucho.[36] Briefly stated, the political objective of Sendero is to stimulate a "peasant armed struggle" that will lead to the overthrow of the current constitutional government and install a leftist, ethnic Indian State by the year 2000.[37] Utilizing his position with the university, Guzman was able to undertake a methodical recruitment process involving his university students. By the mid-1970's Sendero was able to expand its initial base of support beyond Ayacucho into the surrounding areas of Cusco, Apurimac, Huacavelica, and Junin, as well as into the city of Lima.[38]

By the early 1980's Sendero was seeking a peasant base of support in the Upper-Huallaga valley. Up to that time the movement had largely ignored the jungle areas. The desire to expand into the valley occurred as the movement came under increased pressure from the Peruvian military's

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[35]McCormick, G. H., "The Shining Path and the Future of Peru," *RAND*, March 1990, p. 22.

[36]Ibid., p. 3.

[37]*Terrorist Group Profiles*, (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1989), p. 106.

[38]McCormick, "Shining,", p. 5.

counterinsurgency campaign in Sendero's home department of Ayacucho. In addition the valley provided a remote inaccessible territory with Vietnam like savannas and rain forests. Potential financing from taxing coca growers, and the ever important peasant base formed from a disaffected peasantry angered by the U.S. backed Peruvian anti-narcotics campaign provided additional motivation.[39] Sendero's entrenchment in the valley was further assisted when Peruvian President, Alan Garcia, lifted the state of emergency that had existed in the valley from July 1984 to December 1985. During this time period the army was given virtually dictatorial powers in the region. The Army was more concerned with pursuing Sendero, while tolerating the narcotics industry in the valley. When the state of emergency was lifted, and army protection with it, Sendero was able to step in and present themselves as defenders of the coca growers.[40]

Sendero's current combat strength has been estimated at a low end of 4,500, to as high as 10,000.[41] Regardless, Sendero is a significant force in Peru,

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[39]Gonzalez, R., "Coca y Subversion en el Huallaga," *QueHacer*, 48 (September-October 1987), p. 72. Collett, M., "Maoist Guerrilla Band Complicates Anti-Drug War in Peru," *Washington Post*, 4 June 1988, p. A22. McClintock, C., "The War on Drugs: The Peruvian Case," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, v. 30, nos. 2 and 3, (Summer/Fall, 1988), pp. 137-138.

[40]Bridges, T., "Peruvian Rebels Supplant Army as Shield for Drug Producers," *The Wall Street Journal*, 4 May 1987, p. 23.

[41]*Patterns of Global Terrorism: 1989*, (Department of State Publication, 1989), p. 72. McCormick "Shining," p. 3.

and its presence in the Upper-Huallaga valley means it cannot be divorced from U.S. backed interdiction campaign.

A second, though lesser Peruvian insurgent threat, is the Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (MRTA). MRTA was first formed in 1983 and performed its first terrorist acts in 1984. MRTA's cadre has been estimated to number several hundred (possibly as high as 600), and its terrorist acts have largely been limited to the urban areas around Lima.[42] Despite MRTA's small numbers it did contest Sendero for a position in the Upper-Huallaga valley. But by 1987 Sendero had gained the upper hand in the valley, and displaced MRTA in most of the area.[43] Though MRTA does not present a threat as powerful as Sendero, and is not currently involved in the Upper-Huallaga valley, it is still part of the narcotics equation as it siphons off Peruvian military and police assets that the U.S. would like to see utilized in anti-narcotics operations.

2. Colombia's Revolutionaries

The drug war in Colombia is probably the most complex of the three Andean nations being examined. Not only does Colombia suffer from several guerilla insurgencies, one of which is directly involved in the drug trade, but also must contend with a narco-terrorist network that has directly

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[42]Graham, C., "New Guerrilla Group Increases Peruvian Pressure Cooker," *The Wall Street Journal*, 26 February 1988, p. 15.

[43]Gonzalez, R., "El Retorno de lo Reprimido: El Huallaga, Un Ano Despues," *QueHacer*, 54 (August-September 1988), p. 46. McClintock, "Peruvian Case," p. 138.

challenged Colombian institutions. To further complicate the situation 150 legally sanctioned paramilitary organizations operate in the rural areas.

The largest Colombian guerilla insurgency, and the one that currently is directly involved with the drug industry, is the Colombian Revolutionary Armed Forces (FARC). FARC is currently estimated to have approximately 4,500 to 5,000 armed combatants and 10,000 supporters.[44] FARC's objectives are to overthrow the established order in Colombia and replace it with a leftist and anti-American regime. FARC is considered to be the best trained, equipped, and one of the most effective guerilla organizations in Latin America.

Largely operating in the countryside, FARC was presented with the opportunity to profit from the drug trade where its operational fronts overlapped into areas of coca production. Thus, as in Peru with Sendero, FARC was able to utilize narco-dollars to finance its operations. FARC's role in the drug industry was first brought into light in April 1984, when a complex of seventeen processing laboratories in the eastern lowlands was raided. Cocaine worth an estimated $1.2 billion was seized, and the forty to sixty employees of the complex were protected by 100 FARC guerrillas.[45]

Like Sendero, FARC initially received its revenues by taxing coca growers who then provided coca paste to the drug cartels. FARC has since decided, in certain cases, to directly manage coca cultivation and cocaine

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[44]*Global Terrorism: 1989*, p. 72.

[45]MacDonald, *Volcano*, p. 72.

processing facilities.[46] In fact the Colombian magazine *Semana* has called FARC the third cartel. This cut out the cartels' role as middlemen and precipitated their refusal to purchase coca paste from FARC, thus ending the uneasy relationship that had existed between the guerrillas and the cartels.

FARC has periodically attempted negotiating truces with the Colombian government. In 1984 the government and FARC signed a cease fire that allowed the rebels to enter electoral politics. The Patriotic Union Candidates won 10 congressional, and 19 mayoral positions. But at the same time FARC expanded its rural-base fronts from 27 to its present 40. The truce that the government apparently had with FARC also did not prevent guerilla ambushes against army units.[47] Part of the difficulty in negotiating with FARC is that the various "fronts" usually operate as individual groups, with little or no coordination between them.

Recently there have been overtures of another truce between FARC and the Colombian government. But documents discovered by the Colombian military indicate FARC may not yet be ready to lay down their weapons. The documents detail a long-range plan by FARC to seize power in Colombia by 1997. Under the plan FARC intends to create 38 additional fronts to include 32,000 guerilla fighters. The plan is to be financed with 25 million

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[46]Lee, R. W. L, III, "The Cocaine Dilemma in South America," in *The Latin American Narcotics Trade and U.S. National Security*, ed. Donald J. Mabry, (New York: Greenwood Press, 1989), p. 70.

[47]Collett, M., "Battling for Power with Bullets and Ballots," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 16 May 1988, p. 10.

pesos obtained from kidnappings, blackmail, and from narcotics.[48] The plan also outlines the building of landing sites, creating a FARC war headquarters, and actions to paralyze the country's transportation, power, and communication systems.[49] Though this plan may be extremely optimistic, it does indicate FARC intends to remain a major actor within Colombia. As such it cannot be discounted in any anti-narcotics interdiction strategy.

As in Peru, with MRTA, Colombia contains several other insurgency groups. Like MRTA these insurgencies may not be directly involved in the narcotics industry, but they cannot be discounted from the narcotics equation because they operate in narco-trafficking areas and confront Colombian security forces being used in anti-narcotics operations.

The National Liberation Army (ELN), though small in numbers, has been one of the most active insurgent groups in Colombia.[50] ELN is a pro-Cuban, *Marxist-Leninist* organization. ELN has been particularly effective in crippling Colombia's oil industry. Since 1986 it has inflicted major damage

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[48]Additional documentation captured concerning FARC's revenue raising operation indicates that all but seven of the movement's forty fronts were instructed to raise $28,169 every month. The remaining seven fronts were instructed to contribute $563,380 each month. Significantly, the seven big contributors are the fronts operating in Guauiare, Uraba, Cordoba, the Yari plains, Caqueta, Putamayo, middle Magdalena, and Middle and Lower Caguan--all Colombian coca-growing area. ("Doubts over FARC's Peace Commitment," *Andean Group Report*, RA-89-04, 18 May 1989).

[49]"Army Comments on FARC Plan, Extraditables," Bogata Inravision Television, 20 January 1990, *FBIS-LAT-90-014*, 22 January 1990, p. 54.

[50]ELN strength is estimated to be between 1,000 and 2,000 (*Global Terrorism*: 1989).

on Colombia's oil pipeline. ELN has also clashed with Venezuelan National Guard Units involved in anti-narcotics patrols along the Colombian/Venezuelan border.

Two Colombian insurgent groups, M-19 and the Peoples Liberation Army (EPL), have recently made peace with the Colombian government. M-19 was particularly significant because its actions most clearly demonstrated a possible symbiosis between narco-traffickers and an insurgent group. M-19's boldest act of terrorism was its storming of the Colombian Palace of Justice in 1985. Over 100 people were killed in the ensuing shootout with Colombian military units. Initially, the motives for the attack were thought to be M-19's desire to reopen negotiations with the government. But subsequent investigations revealed that M-19 may have been paid $5 million by the Medellin cartel to conduct the attack, the purpose being to destroy government files of cartel members facing extradition to the United States.[51]

The last two elements of the Colombian terrorist equation is the direct use of terror by the cartel 'sicarios' (hitmen) as well as the involvement of the approximately 150 Colombian paramilitary organizations. Cartel financed-terrorism has directly challenged Colombian institutions, intimidating judges and the press, assassinating policemen and going as far as to threaten political candidates.[52]

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[51]Anderson, J., and Van Atta, D., "The Medellin Cartel/M19 Gang," *Washington Post*, 28 August 1988, p. B7a.

[52]Most narco-financed acts of terror are conducted by the Medellin Cartel, the Cali cartel being content to operate behind the scenes.

Some of the most spectacular and most publicized acts of terror have been accomplished by the 'sicarios' of the Medellin Cartel. Most of the sicarios are recruited directly from the urban slums of Medellin. Many of them are little more than teenagers, who are given guns, trained in their use, then given motorcycles and sent on their terror missions. The price for a death can range from as little as $40 to as much as $8,000, which was the amount agreed upon for the murder of Justice Minister Rodrigo Lara Bonilla in 1984.[53] In 1986 sicarios assassinated Col. Jaime Ramirez, former head of the antinarcotics police, and Guillermo Cano, editor of Colombia's second largest newspaper, El Espectador.[54]

The most notorious assassination occurred on August 18, 1989, when popular presidential candidate Luis Carlos Galan was murdered by a sicario hit team. This resulted in galvanizing the Colombian anti-narcotics effort. The Colombian military and police offensive involved more than 80,000 personnel, and seized an impressive amount of cartel hardware, including: 367 aircraft, 72 boats, 710 vehicles, 4.7 tons of cocaine, 1279 guns, and 25,000 rounds of ammunition.[55] Despite this impressive effort by Colombian security forces the Medellin cartel still was able to fight back with a vengeance.

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[53]Collett, M. "Political, Criminal Violence Increasing in Colombia," *Washington Post*, 3 October 1987, p. A20.

[54]Ross, T., "Colombia's New Antiterrorism Campaign: A Paper Tiger?," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 1 February 1988, p. 12.

[55]Brooke, J., "War Report from Colombia: Fight Will Be Long," *New York Times*, 18 September 1989, p. 12. "Barco Wages All Out War against Narcos," *Andea Group Report*, RA-89-08, 5 October 1989.

From mid-August to mid-October 1989 narco hitmen staged 222 terrorist attacks (bombings and assassinations) killing 22 people, wounding 109, and causing $18 million in property damage.[56]

Part of the cartel's advantage is their almost unlimited financing, with which they can provide intense combat training and the latest in weaponry to their soldiers. One source for both weapons and training has been Israel. The discovery of a weapons cache on a remote ranch owned by the late cartel kingpin Jose Rodriguez Gacha has called into question the Israeli connection. Yair Klein, a retired Israeli lieutenant colonel, acknowledged training armed groups in remote areas of northern Colombia. The weapons found on Gacha's ranch included 178 Galil assault rifles. The rifles were part of a lot of 400 Galils, 100 Uzi submachine-guns, and 200,000 rounds of ammunition.[57] Colombian security forces have alleged that eleven British mercenaries have also helped train sicarios for the cocaine cartels.[58]

The United States is also guilty of providing weapons for the cartels. A U.S. official estimated that as much as 80 percent of the weapons utilized by the cartels are of U.S. origin. The weapons are sold legally in the United

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[56]"Narcos Resume Selective Murders," *Andean Group Report* RA-89-10, 14 December 1989, p. 3.

[57]The weapons were part of a shipment allegedly bought by the government of Antigua for its 80-man defense force. After arriving in Antigua on 23 April 1989 they were transported to Colombia and into the hands of Gacha. (Farah, D., "Colombia: U.S. Arming Traffickers," *Washington Post*, 12 June 1990, p. A16. McAllister, B., and Diehl, J., "Israeli Arms Went to Colombian Cartel," *Washington Post*, 7 Mary 1990, p. A14.

[58]McAllister and Diehl, "Israeli Arms," P. A14.

States as semi-automatics which can then be modified into automatics. The weapons include Ingram and MAC-13 machine pistols, used in the killing of three presidential candidates, M-16s, AR-15, and AK-47 assault rifles. The weapons are bought two or three at a time and then shipped to Colombia in lots of 15 or 20.[59] The lengths to which the cartels are willing to go was revealed in May of this year when two drug dealers, working for the Medellin Cartel, tried to buy 120 Stinger antiaircraft missiles for use against Colombian government aircraft.[60]

Paramilitary groups have also entered the picture as an armed asset for use by the cartels. Colombian paramilitary organizations were legally sanctioned in 1968 by the passing of Law 48 of the Colombian Constitution. This law authorized the use of civilian personnel in activities and tasks for the "re-establishment of normality." What the law meant was that the Defense Ministry had the power to hand over army issue weapons to private citizens.[61] This law was initially passed to confront Colombia's growing leftist insurgency movements. Colombian authorities estimate that approximately

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[59]Farah, "Arming Traffickers," P. A16.

[60]Isikoff, M., "Two Colombians Arrested in Scheme to Buy Missiles," *Washington Post*, 8 Mary 1990.

[61]"Colombia Acts against Private Armies," *Andean Group Report*, RA-89-05, 22 June 1989, p. 4.

150 such groups now operate in Colombia with a total strength of between 4,000 to 5,000 men.[62]

In the mid-80's the Medellin cartel began buying huge tracts of land in central Colombia. To protect their landholdings the cartel began using Law 48 as a pretense in forming their own self defense groups, as a cover for establishing their own private armies. In addition the cartels strengthened, trained, and gave modern weapons to the paramilitary groups that already were in existence in these areas.[63]

These paramilitary groups are responsible for much of the violence in rural Colombia. They have been linked to peasant massacres, the killing of judges and policemen investigating paramilitary violations, and the assassinations of two leftist presidential candidates. A leader of one of the Medellin cartel's paramilitary forces is Fidel Castano, who owns a ranch of 250,000 acres. Despite the uncovering of numerous mass graves on his property, it has been reputed that his paramilitary forces are able to pass through military checkpoints because he uses his forces against leftist insurgency groups. Though there has been an arrest warrant issued against Castano, authorities give little hope in catching him. This is partly due to support from the locals because he has been effective in controlling guerilla

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[62]"Paramilitary Groups Offer to Give Up Arms," *Miami Herald*, 10 May 1990.

[63]"Private Armies," p. 4. Farah, D., "Cartel Enforcer Linked to Massacres," *Washington Post*, 6 May 1990, p. A28.

activity. In addition no one can be found to testify against him out of fear for reprisals by Castano.[64]

3. Confusion In Bolivia

Bolivia is unique among the Andean coca growing countries because it is not threatened by narco-terrorism or an effective guerilla movement.[65] The group that most interferes with Bolivia's drive to rid itself of coca cultivation, and frustrates U.S. drug policy there, is Bolivia's rural labor organizations.

As in Peru, coca cultivation in Bolivia has a long history. Traditionally, chewing coca leaf has been source of energy and protein for the rural population. Following Bolivia's 1952 revolution the peasantry emerged independent and well organized. The boom in cocaine prices in the late 70's coupled with a collapse in tin prices brought a large influx of peasants into the Chapare and Yungas regions to cultivate coca.

With the cocaine industry directly employing 350,000 to 400,000 people, in a relatively small and poor country, cocaine growers have become a regional and national political force.[66] These coca producers have organized

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[64]"Private Armies," p. 4. "Cartel Enforcer," p. A28.

[65]Bolivia does possess one little-known revolutionary movement called the Armed Liberation Forces Zarate Wilka (FAL). Its armed strength is believed to be relatively small. Its most notable terrorist acts to date have been the bombing of former U.S. Secretary of State, George Schultz's motorcade in La Paz in August 1988, and the assassination of two Mormon missionaries in May 1989. (*Global Terrorism: 1989*)

[66]Lee, R. W. III, "Cocaine Dilemma," p. 60.

themselves into the Asociacion Nacional de Productores de Coca (ANAPCOCA). Their goal is to thwart government crop control and law enforcement by the use of mass demonstrations, occupation of government buildings, roadblocks, and occasionally violent clashes against government forces.[67]

The peasantry's effectiveness has been demonstrated on a number of occasions, when they have forced the reversal of government decisions concerning coca or resisted eradication forces. One of the earliest examples of this occurred in January of 1986 when 245 members of the Bolivian anti-narcotics police UMOPAR (Mobile Units for Rural Areas, also known as the 'Leopards'), moved into the Chapare region to destroy illegal coca paste operations. The Leopards were eventually besieged by approximately 17,000 protesting farmers, for five days. The siege ended only when Bolivian President Victor Paz Estensorro agreed to meet with the farmers himself, and hear their grievances.[68]

In a more recent incident, in June 1989, a peasant union leader by the name of Evo Morales incited 1,500 to 2,000 Bolivian farmers to surround a force of the Leopards. Four of the Leopards managed to escape into the jungle, the other five were beaten before they managed to be rescued. Also in June, 15,000 peasants gathered in a peaceful protest at the main Leopard base

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[67]Healy, K., "Coca, the State, and the Peasantry in Bolivia, 1982-1988," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, v. 30 (Summer/Fall 1988), pp. 110-111.

[68]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 361.

at Villa Tunari, to mark the anniversary of a peasant death during an attempt to invade the Leopard base.[69]

Bolivian peasants are also capable of more violent acts of protest as demonstrated by an incident occurring on 22 June 1989. In this incident the Leopards raided the house of a well-known drug trafficker. In the resulting shootout, 5 of the traffickers bodyguards were killed and 5 wounded. But the Leopards had no time to capture the trafficker, Hugo Rivera Villavicencia, because a gun battle ensued between the Leopards and an armed crowd of approximately 300 people drawn to the initial shootout. The Leopards managed to escape, but two of the evacuation helicopters were damaged in the fire fight.[70]

Bolivia's narco-traffickers have taken advantage of the organized coca growers by trying to establish coca "red zones." These red zones are coca growing regions where the traffickers have infiltrated civic groups and peasant union organizations. The peasants are then directed to resist government eradication teams. In these zones only people known by the residents are allowed in. The most successful red zones are located in the Chapare region and have greatly complicated the anti-narcotics campaign there.[71]

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[69]Long, W. R., "Bolivian 'Red Zones'--Havens for Drugs," *Los Angeles Times*, 10 July 1989.

[70]Ibid.

[71]Long, *"Red Zones."*

These examples show the effectiveness of Bolivia's rural coca growers. This effectiveness has not gone unnoticed by Bolivia's narco-traffickers.

4. The Mexican Illusion

The Mexican political machine, dominated by the Partido Revolucinario Institucional (PRI), is undoubtedly one of the most stable in Latin America. Albeit not democratic, Mexico' political system nonetheless continues to withstand attacks from opposing political fronts. Superficially it would appear that the drug trade has had little impact on the credibility and strength of the Mexican system. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Mexican case differs somewhat from her Latin partners in that her security is not immediately threatened but the gradual impact of the narcotics trade has been enormous. As stated by Mabry, "...narcotrafficking has done what even the most corrupt politicians could not do; it has rendered dysfunctional the cement of Mexican politics."[72] This became quite clear in the Camarena murder of 1985, when scores of commanders and agents from Mexico's Federal Judicial Police and the Federal Security Directorate were directly implicated in drug trafficking. Resulting investigations uncovered links between narcotraffickers and government personnel at all levels. Not unlike Colombia in this form of infiltration, and the situation is probably worse given the levels of corruption that are accepted as normal business in Mexico.

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[72]Mabry, *Narcotics and National Security*, p. 29.

Perhaps the greatest security threat to Mexico is the level of narcoterrorism, particularly in the past five years. Literally hundreds of federal and local police have been assassinated by the narco mafia and it would appear that the Mexican government is actually losing territory.

Whether by corruption or intimidation, they exercise de facto power in portions of six states: Sinaloa, Durango, Chihuahua, Guerrero, Veracruz, and Oaxaca. In the process 'los narcos' have demonstrated time and again that the supposedly all encompassing government in Mexico City does not truly enjoy unlimited reach.[73]

The loss of this territory by the Mexican government is a direct result of the rural neglect demonstrated over the past 20-25 years. Not unlike Peru, the campesinos have resorted to marijuana cultivation and trafficking as a method of subsistence that had previously been impossible. This, combined with a drastic increase in domestic addiction, poses a severe national security threat to Mexico's political system. The internal threats are often compounded by pressures from the United States and as a consequence Mexico is often guilty of indecisiveness.

Considering the proximity of Mexico to the United States, she is often viewed as the biggest narco-security threat. The porous border that exists between the countries is a major avenue for the infiltration of narcotics, illegal aliens, smuggled terrorists and various other contraband. Forty percent of Colombia's cocaine is shipped through Mexico to the United States

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[73]Ibid., p. 31.

and as pressures are increased in the Caribbean this percentage increases to as high as seventy percent. The border situation is familiar to the population of both sides, however little can be done to rectify the ease with which the border can be penetrated.

The illusion that Mexico has its problem under control is clearly a result of the sensitivity of bilateral relations with the United States. Unlike Colombia, Peru and Bolivia, the bilateral relationship between the United States and Mexico is based on much more than the problems of narcotics control and occasional trade agreements. As a result of this both countries tend to play down the severity of the Mexican connection, especially when referring directly to the issue of cocaine trafficking. However, as time passes, it is becoming increasingly evident that the Colombian cartels will continue to refine the Mexican delivery system because of its illusive and cost effective potentials.

C. THE MILITARY DILEMMA: GUERRILLAS & NARCOTICS, PERU, COLOMBIA & BOLIVIA

1. The Drug War: Peru

The drug war in Peru presents a dilemma for Peruvian security forces, particularly the Peruvian military. On one hand Peru is faced with the Sendero insurgency, which members of the Peruvian army see as the primary threat to their country. On the other hand Sendero cannot be divorced from the drug war because they receive most of their financing by collecting taxes from coca growers in the upper-Huallaga valley. But the Peruvian Army does not wish to antagonize the coca growers for fear of driving them into the arms of Sendero.

The U.S. stance on this Peruvian dilemma seems rather clear. A DEA report in 1989 concluded that the Peruvian Guardia Civil, including its anti-narcotics police, lacked proper weapons, military skills, and thus was a threat to individuals and property. State Department investigators were told that there were 18 instances over the past two years of self inflicted wounds by Guardia Civil Personnel.[74] Therefore, the U.S. has placed its hope that the Peruvian military institutions would enter the drug war and provide the decisive factor in its outcome.

Peru's 80,000-man army, in fact, could provide important assets to the drug war in the Huallaga valley. The increased manpower would enable closer monitoring of traffick along the valley's main highway, military radars could track cartel aircraft as they fly into Peru from Colombia, and the military could provide increased protection for DEA agents and CORAH workers (Peru's crop eradication teams) as they attack the coca fields.[75] The army would also be able to provide important air assets including 34 Mi-8 helicopters, a particular badly-needed commodity.

In fact the Peruvian military has been used against drug traffickers in the past. In 1986 President Alan Garcia launched a renewed phase of the ongoing 'Operation Condor.' Peruvian Air Force aircraft strafed and bombed airstrips while troops seized drugs and destroyed processing laboratories. By the end of 1986, Operation Condor forces had seized 165 airstrips, 36

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[74]Isikoff, M., "Anti-Cocaine Programs called Ineffective, Wasteful," *Washington Post*, July 1989.

[75]Massing, "Cocaine War," p. 88.

laboratories, seventy aircraft, and 30 tons of coca paste.[76] Operation Condor has been the exception to the rule. Generally, the Peruvian military has been kept out of the drug war; the military has actively opposed a role in the war. In resisting efforts to become involved, the army has also hampered the effectiveness of the Guardia Civil and the DEA in prosecuting narcotics operations.

Until December 1989 General Alberto Arciniega was in command of the 4,000 Peruvian troops assigned to the upper-Huallaga valley.[77] His attitude exemplified what the Peruvian military sees as the primary threat to Peru and how to best deal with it. His strategy has frustrated both U.S. and Peruvian narcotics officials in their attempts to deal with the narcotics problems present in the valley.

General Arciniega perceives the Sendero Luminoso movement as the worst threat to Peru. Though the use of coca financing helps strengthen Sendero, the general did not see crop eradication as a solution to help cripple the movement. General Arciniega viewed the 150,000 peasants growing coca in the valley potentially a vast pool of support for Sendero, if their coca livelihood was wiped out. He considers winning over the peasants as the key to defeating Sendero in the valley, and the only way to accomplish this is with a viable crop substitution plan operating in tandem with eradication.

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[76]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 366.

[77]General Arciniega was replaced by General Luis Chacon.

With crop substitution not feasible at this time, he supported the peasants in their fight to grow coca.[78]

Many in Peru agree with the General's position, they do not consider drug consumption as a serious problem in Peru, and the country does not suffer from narco-terrorism of the kind that plagues Colombia. But General Arciniega's attitude was at odds with those of Civil Guard Genera, Juan Zarate, whose anti-narcotics police are responsible for stopping drug trafficking in the valley. Zarate, who relies on the U.S. for logistical support, has a vested interest in seeing cocaine as his prime target.[79]

With these two different viewpoints guiding policy in the Huallaga, conflicts have arisen. The Peruvian army has been accused of overtly hampering UMOPAR (Peruvian anti-narcotics strike police) and DEA operations in the region as well as providing blatant help to traffickers. There have been instances of the Peruvian military failing to come to the aid of police units under attack from insurgents.[80] General Arciniega himself has been accused of taking payoffs from traffickers to ignore their operations and to gain any information from traffickers that may help against Sendero.[81]

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[78]Massing, M., "In the Cocaine War: The Jungle is Winning," *New York Times*, 4 March 1990, Sec. VI, p. 88.

[79]Greve, F., "Two Generals Key to Peru's Control of Coca Valley," *Miami Herald*, 30 September 1989.

[80]Getler, M., and Robinson, E., "Peru's Rebels Muddy Drug Drive," *Washington Post*, 3 November 1989, p. A32.

[81]Greve, F., "Two Generals."

With little help forthcoming from the Peruvian Military, the anti-narcotics strategy in Peru has centered around the base at Santa Lucia in the upper-Huallaga valley. The base is manned by thirty to forty U.S. DEA agents and 100 members of UMOPAR. The idea to work from a base in the valley resulted from a forced retreat by the DEA from the valley due to increased hostility from coca growers, and especially from the threat of Sendero. The base was designed by two former members of the U.S. Special Forces, and epitomizes the growing militarization of the drug war in Peru. It is equipped with watchtowers, sandbagged bunkers, and a mined perimeter. From it the DEA and UMOPAR have been able to conduct helicopter forays into the valley in search of coca processing labs and illegal airstrips.[82] Operating from the base in January and February 1990, UMOPAR and the DEA, in fact, were able to destroy 24 coca processing labs and three illegal airstrips. The United States is considering expanding the use of such bases by building one near the emerging coca area near the juncture of the Tombo and Ene rivers.[83]

Though the base at Santa Lucia has shown some promise in the drug war, there have been some problems and potential shortcomings with the use of the fortified bases. When the base was built it was assumed that it was so fortified that Sendero, relying on a mixture of weapons, would not be strong enough to attack it. On April 7 1990 this assumption proved wrong when the

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[82]Brooke, J., "Peru Builds Base to Combat Coca Production," *New York Times*, 13 June 1989, p. A9. Reid, M., "Peru and U.S. Squabble over Base," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 7 November 1989.

[83]Brooke, J., "U.s. Giving Major New Arms Aid on Drugs to Peru," *New York Times*, 21 April 1989, p. A8.

base was attacked by a force of 200 to 300 insurgents. There are also indications that Sendero, for the first time, is in possession of mortars, which, without army support, would make the base that much more vulnerable to attack.[84] With the amount of money earned by Sendero in the valley, there is little doubt they have the ability to escalate the conflict if they so wish.

Another problem is that the base only operates with eight helicopters, and there have been problems with the civilian contract pilots who fly them. Some of the pilots have struck for better pay (they can earn as much as $150,000 per year), and there have been allegations of fraud and misappropriation in the operation of anti-narcotics aircraft by the contractor, Corporate Jets.

2. The Drug War: Colombia

Unlike Peru, Colombia has enlisted about 20,000 members of its military into the drug war. There may be several reasons for this. Like Peru, Colombia is faced with an insurgent movement that is a confirmed player in the narcotics industry (FARC). But unlike Peru, Colombia is faced with an additional adversary with the presence of the powerful drug cartels. This combination has taxed the ability of the National Police Force to handle the problem.

The Colombian military institution has recognized the threat presented by the combined narco-terror and armed insurgency movements. It has been vocal in denouncing the threat of drug trafficking and has

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[84]Brooke, J., "U.S.-Peruvian Teams Renew Drive on Coca," *New York Times*, 18 march 1990, p. 6.

exhorted the Colombian people to cooperate in the struggle against narcotics.[85]

At the same time the armed forces hierarchy is keenly aware of the difficulty of the task. Of particular concern is that the image of the armed forces as guardians of the state will be tarnished by the corrupting influence of drug money. This has been a concern of army commanders since the armed forces was assigned tasks relating the drug war by President Virgilio Barco in May 1988. President Barco reportedly overruled military concerns about corrupting influences on the armed forces after recognizing that corruption and fear had paralyzed the police's anti-drug role.[86]

In March 1989 former Army Commander, General Nelson Mejia, acknowledged that drug traffickers were seeking to infiltrate the armed forces. By November 1989, shortly after the assassination of Presidential Candidate Luis Carlos Galan, there was increased recognition of the widespread presence of corruption within the armed forces. A spokesman for the defense ministry conceded that there were military men linked to drug traffickers within army ranks, but emphasized that they make up less than one percent of the armed forces.

But Colombian Attorney General Alfonso Gomez Mendez was even more vocal in his denouncement of armed forces corruption. Gomez

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[85]"Armed Forces Editorial on Fighting Drug Lords," *FBIS-LAT-89-185*, 26 September 1989, p. 30.

[86]Riding, A., "Colombia Uses Army in Cocaine Raids," *New York Times*, 5 May 1988, p. A3.

Mendez stated that the war against the drug cartels should be carried out solely by the police, without the military. Gomez Mendez stated to top military commanders that use of the armed forces in the drug war was a mistake, and that if the rebels had infiltrated the military forces as the drug traffickers have, the rebels would have seized power a long time ago.[87]

In fact instances of corruption have been significant. In 1989 over 2,100 military men including 130 officers were fired or asked to retire due to bad conduct. Their offenses ranged from running weapons for the Medellin cartel to actively taking part in acts of terrorist bombings. Two of the assassins who took part in the assassination of Galan turned out to be former Colombian security agents.[88] Though the firing of so many members of the armed forces does show that infiltration of the institution is serious, it also demonstrates that the Colombian government is making efforts at rooting out corruption.

Part of the problem in involving the Colombian military with the drug war is similar to the situation faced by Peru, in that the military has a tendency to see the guerilla insurgency problem as being more important than stopping drug trafficking. This is manifested in the army's seeming toleration of the numerous paramilitary groups originally formed to fight communist insurgencies, but recently having come under the control of the

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[87]"Gomez Mendez says Army Infiltrated by Cartel," *FBIS-LAT-89-217*, 13 November 1989, p. 54. "Military Authorities Admit Corruption in Army," *FBIS-LAT-89-182*, 21 September 1989, p. 27.

[88]Oppenheimer, A., "Drug Traffickers Corrupt, Infiltrate Colombian Forces," *Miami Herald*, 30 November 1989.

drug cartels. The paramilitary groups have increasingly been involved in drug related terror, but they also have been effective in eliminating leftist insurgencies in their areas of operation, thus benefiting the military. The dilemma faced by the military is demonstrated by the fact that former cartel kingpin Carlos Rodriguez Gacha was seen in the company of army officers presiding over graduation ceremonies of drug funded anti-guerilla squads in Colombia's Magdelena region. One expert on the Colombian drug war stated that "it is hard for an army officer to turn overnight against the guy, who until the day before was his partner in fighting the guerrillas."[89]

As the drug war has progressed the Colombian military has come under increased criticism concerning its inability to capture the major drug traffickers, particularly Pablo Escobar. This criticism has centered on the armed forces' structure, as well as a lack of coordination between the institutions involved in fighting the drug war.

The criticism of the structure of the armed forces is that since the time of independence Colombia's concept of security has been based on the idea of confronting an external enemy. The only foreign war that Colombia has experienced was a brief border confrontation with Peru, whereas Colombia has suffered and is currently suffering from an internal threat manifested by the presence of leftist insurgencies and narco-terrorists. The critics argue that the emphasis on the external enemy has led the armed forces to purchase sophisticated weapons such as Israeli-made Kfir fighters,

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[89]Oppenheimer, "Traffickers Corrupt."

and for repairs to its submarine force, weapons systems that would be of little or no use in the drug war.[90]

The other critical areas are a lack of coordination between the separate branches of the armed forces' and other government intelligence agencies. The lack of coordination between armed forces branches usually comes down to a simple lack of communication, a situation not uncommon among many armed forces throughout the world. Prior to his being killed, Rodriguez Gacha was allowed to escape when Air Force A-37's took off too early in a planed army/air force operation. The aircraft alerted Gacha before the army was ready to move in, and he was allowed to escape.

Intelligence, an area critical in fighting narco-terror, has also come under increasing criticism. The five agencies concerned with the gathering of intelligence in Colombia are DAS (Colombia's FBI), DIJIN (Judicial and Investigative Police), and the intelligence branches of the army, air force, and navy. Though there has been cooperation between DAS and DIJIN, the Colombian intelligence community suffers from the lack of an overall coordinating agency that would be able to effectively utilize the various intelligence communities.[91]

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[90]Sources indicate that 70 percent of the Colombian Navy's budget is to be spent on the repair of its submarine fleet. While the Navy had only five vessels to monitor the numerous waterways that are used as weapons and rug routes by the narco-traffickers. ("Armed Forces Pursuit of Escobar Discussed," *FBIS-LAT-90-106*, 1 June 1990.).

[91]Ibid.

Colombia, until 1988, almost exclusively relied on its 70,000 member national police force and DAS to combat its burgeoning drug trade.[92] Even with Colombian military involvement, the National police still conduct 85 to 90 percent of anti-narcotic operations in Colombia. But their inability to control the drug trade and related violence forced President Barco to call in the military.

Part of the problem with the National Police, like all of the institutions involved in the drug war, has been the corrupting influence of narco-dollars. A Colombian policeman earns $128 dollars a month, and may receive $255 dollars a month from the traffickers. A police captain who earns $180 dollars a month, may receive as much as $5000 dollars a month. One narco-trafficker's ledger showed that he paid $100,000 a month for police protection. Needless to say, the amount of money that can be earned illegally by law enforcement officers not only for turning a blind eye to narco-trafficking but also in providing traffickers with valuable intelligence, gives the cartels a significant advantage in the drug war.[93] Police corruption has forced out the former commander of the National Police force, and shortly after taking over in February 1989 General Miguel Gomez Padilla fired over 2000 police officers for links with drug traffickers.

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[92]Colombia did in fact use the military in an attempt to control marijuana trafficking in the Guamira Peninsula during the late 1970s. The military voluntarily withdrew from the campaign due to the widespread corrupting influence of narco-dollars.

[93]Treaster, J. B., "Colombian Policemen and Soldiers are Reportedly Tipping Off Drug Figures," *New York Times*, 4 September 1989, p. 3.

The National Police also suffer from a lack of modern equipment, and have been critical of President Bush's September 1989 emergency aid package. Many of the National Policeman still carry the forty-year-old M-1 carbine, while their narco adversaries are armed with the latest automatic weaponry. In considering the overwhelming role of the police in fighting the drug war, General Gomez Padilla was particularly critical of the U.S. $65 million emergency aid package. The equipment sent included A-37 jets, jeeps, helicopters, machine guns, and two C-130's, and was earmarked for the Colombian military. The police desire for sophisticated equipment to aid intelligence bureaus went largely unheeded.

General Gomez Padilla's police forces need surveillance and tracking equipment as well as bomb detectors, and equipment for tracing telephone calls and scrambling police phone calls. Intelligence gathering equipment is recognized as an key element in aiding the police in fighting narco-trafficking.

On the plus side, Colombia has recognized some of the deficiencies in its abilities to fight the drug war. It has reversed its policies which allowed the hand out of military issue weapons to civilians in the formation of anti-guerilla self defense units, by suspending the pertinent clauses of Law 48. This has significantly reduced the ability of the cartels to legally form their own private armies. The government has also attempted to coordinate the various intelligence agencies by creating the National Intelligence Council (NIC). NIC is chaired by the Minister of the Interior and includes the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Justice, the Chief of DAS, the General

Commander of the Armed Forces, and the Director General of the National Police.[94] In an effort to alleviate the corrupting influence existing in the National Police, the government created the Elite Corps. The Elite Corps is a handpicked anti-narcotics strike force drawn from the National Police with the power to call on the support of the military as well as all of the intelligence forces.[95]

Though statistics can be subject to varying interpretations, Colombian anti-narcotics forces have made steady progress on drug seizures and on the number of arrests. In 1985 there were 1,951 arrests made, 3,699 in 1986, 4,724 in 1987, 5,596 in 1988, and 1,707 in the first six months of 1989. The amount of cocaine seized doubled in 1988 (18,701 kilos) from 8,326 kilos in 1987. In the first six months of 1989 15,879 kilos were seized. From January-June 1989 244 labs were destroyed (831 labs were destroyed in 1988). 326 hectares (one hectare is equal to 2.5 acres) of coca were eradicated in the first six months of 1989, compared to 230 hectares in all of 1988.[96]

In October 1989 a Colombian general announced that the war declared by the drug kingpins had been neutralized. While this statement may have been premature, the stepped up war on drugs in the wake of the Galan

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[94]Though the creation of NIC is sound in theory, the council has never formally met, and the various intelligence agencies still operate as separate entities. ("Armed Forces Pursuit of Escobar Discussed," *FBIS-LAT-90-106*, 1 June 1990, p. 57.)

[95]"Assessing Colombia's Anti-Drug War," *Andean Group Report*, RA-89-08, 5 October 1989, p. 5.

[96]Ibid., p. 5.

assassination yielded some significant results, at least in the short run, which included the killing of cartel drug lord Rodriguez Gacha, the capture Jose Ocampo Obano (the right hand man to Pablo Escobar), and the seizure of a record 19 tons of cocaine in early May 1990, which caused a drop in the price of coca leaf in Bolivia and Peru.[97]

3. The Drug War: Bolivia

Until recently Bolivia has resisted the overt use of the armed forces in fighting narcotics traffic. Not directly threatened by narco-terrorism, or a significant guerilla insurgency, and wary of antagonizing a well organized coca growing peasantry, there seemed no real need to call on the Bolivian Armed Forces. Bolivia was able to rely on its 1,200 man UMOPAR (Mobile Units For Rural Areas) anti-narcotics strike force, with the navy and air force providing logistical support to maintain its fight against drug trafficking.

The military as an institution, as well as Bolivian President Jaime Paz Zamora, had resisted the use of the army. President Paz Zamora and army generals have felt that bringing the army into the drug fight will expose it to corruption by narco-dollars. Also the Bolivian army was still smarting from the infamous 'cocaine coup' of July 17, 1980. The coup was led by General Luis Garcia Meza, who was paid $1,300,000 by coca dealers to lead the coup. Colonel Luis Arce Gomez (a relative of a major Bolivian cocaine dealer) was made the Minister of the Interior. U.S. anti-narcotics operations were

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[97]"Leave the Army out of Colombian Anti-Drug Operations," *The Wall Street Journal*, 18 May 1990, p. A11. Gugliotta, G., "Drug Wars--Hay, We're Winning!," *Washington Post*, 11 February 1990, p. C1. "Army Reports Drug Kingpins War 'Neutralized'," *FBIS-LAT-89-208*, 30 October 1989, p. 65.

abruptly halted shortly thereafter. Government mismanagement eventually led to Garcia Meza's ouster, but the military as an institution was sullied by the affair.[98]

In the middle of 1989 government sources began making pronouncements that the role of the army in the drug fight was being reconsidered. In August 1989 Defense Under Secretary Gonzalo Torrico stated that UMOPAR was suffering from a lack of resources and that its 1,200 man force was too small to handle the increasing strength of the drug traffickers.[99] In October 1989 Bolivian Defense Minister Hector Ormachea confirmed that the government was considering a more decisive role for the army in the fight against drug trafficking, though noting that the final decision had to be made by the president.[100] Later statements by the armed forces commander and again by the defense minister toned down the rhetoric by stating that the armed forces were ready to step in if needed, but that UMOPAR had sufficient resources to handle the situation.

Just prior to the President Bush's drug summit in Cartegena, Colombia, President Paz Zamora confirmed that the armed forces would

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[98]MacDonald, *Volcano*, pp. 56-57.

[99]"Official Terms Antidrug Forces Insufficient," *FBIS-LAT-89-167*, 30 August 1989, p. 33.

[100]"Expansion of Army's Antidrug Role Considered," *FBIS-LAT-89-195*, 11 October 1989, p. 35.

actively participate in his country's anti-drug struggle. The plan called for 5,000 Bolivian soldiers to participate in the campaign.[101]

Despite this proclamation by President Paz Zamora no troops were committed against the drug traffickers other than logistical units. Just prior to the Cartagena summit the military again began a lobbying campaign for greater involvement in the drug war. In early January 1990 Bolivian Army Commander General Rolando Espinoza announced in the newspaper 'La Paz Presencia' that the Bolivian Army would participate in the anti-drug struggle. In the same issue of La Paz Presencia, the Commander in Chief of the Army stated that the Bolivian Army could participate in the drug war only if proper technical and economic support could be obtained at the drug summit. The defense undersecretary added that direct participation by the army against the drug mafia is "necessary and must be implemented." It seemed clear that the army's agenda was to be given a role in the drug fight.[102]

In April 1990 Paz Zamora's National Revolutionary Party (MNR) officially supported use of the armed forces in the drug fight, though the MNR stated that it should be a special force composed of armed forces and police units under a joint command. In what seemed a test case to gauge public reaction, in mid-April 1990 the army's 300 man 'Barrientos' Battalion was deployed to the Chapare coca growing region for what was termed a

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[101] "Armed Forces to Participate in Antidrug Struggle," *FBIS-LAT-89-241*, 18 December 1989, p. 37.

[102] "Armed Forces to Participate in Antidrug Struggle," *FBIS-LAT-89-241*, 18 December 1989, p. 40. "Armed Forces Role in Drug Fight Depends on Aid," *La Paz Presencia*, 9 January 1990.

training exercise. The reaction of ANAPCOCA peasants was swift and vocal concerning the deployment of the battalion. Peasants were particularly concerned that the increased army involvement signaled a heightened crop eradication drive without a viable crop substitution plan to fill the vacuum. The reaction forced the defense minister and President Paz to reassure the peasants that the troops were not taking part in anti-drug operations, but only undertaking routine training.[103]

In May 1990 Paz Zamora seemed to take one step closer in involving the army in the drug fight by authorizing the 'Ustarez' Army Regiment to enter the Chapare region. In response to peasant protests Paz reiterated that the regiment was there only to conduct jungle training exercises. But he added one important caveat in that the army could conduct 'dissuasive' missions at sites where the commanders believe it to be necessary. Though it seems that he is still trying to reassure peasants, the deployment of the regiment indicates that President Paz is ready to fulfill, at least superficially, his agreement at the Cartagena summit to involve the Bolivian Military in the drug war.[104]

Why did the Bolivian Army change its stance on the use of its military in drug interdiction? One reason may be to restore its reputation

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[103]"Army Conducts Exercises in Chapare Coca Region," *FBIS-LAT-90-075*, 18 April 90. "Defense Minister on Fighting Drug Trafficking," *FBIS-LAT-90-075*, 18 April 1990. "Commander Says Troops only Training in Chapare," *FBIS-LAT-90-076*, 19 April 1990.

[104]"Armed Forces Authorized to Fight Narcotrafficking," *FBIS-LAT-90-099*, 22 May 1990, p. 34.

sullied during the Garcia Meza dictatorship. Also, with no viable external threat, the army may be an institution in search of mission. Another reason may be to strengthen the armed forces as an institution. In November 1989 the Bolivian Defense Minister announced that the ministry owed $8 million to creditors and was suffering total bankruptcy. In February 1990 the defense minister commented that defense was the only area that had received a cut in its budget, and that the ministry would barely be able to cover its most basic expenditures such as food, payroll and clothing. The antidrug plan emanating from Washington called for $265 million in aid for Bolivia in 1990. Included in this aid would be $41 million in military assistance. Since this aid was contingent on increased military participation in the drug war, the Bolivian Military had an incentive for pushing a greater role in the drug war.[105]

Will the Bolivian military make a difference? That remains to be seen. It is still not clear if they will have an increased role in the drug war. But if they do, the military will surely suffer from some aspect of drug induced corruption, as have plagued other Andean enforcement institutions. The Bolivian Navy, which already provides logistical support for UMOPAR, has been accused of being riddled with corruption, including becoming involved in fire fights against UMOPAR and DEA units.[106]

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[105]"Defense Ministry 'Suffering Total Bankruptcy'," *FBIS-LAT-89-218*, 14 November 1989, p. 42. "Defense Minister on Budget Cuts, Foreign Troops," *FBIS-LAT-90-030*, 13 February 1990, p. 34.

[106]"Navy Reportedly Protecting Drug Traffickers," *FBIS-LAT-88-190*, 14 October 1988, p. 21.

As in the other two Andean narcotics-supplying nations, the Bolivian police, in cooperation with the DEA, have borne the brunt of anti-narcotics operations. Given the fact that there is no serious rural insurgency in Bolivia, DEA tactics have been able to be more aggressive than in either Peru or Colombia.

The 1,200 man UMOPAR force is Bolivia's primary anti-drug force. Like the agencies in Colombia and Peru it suffers from corruption and a lack of resources. Many members of UMOPAR still carry M1 rifles, while the narco-traffickers are supplied with the latest in automatic weaponry. To improve training, the United States sent a U.S. Army Special Forces team in May 1987. President Bush's aid package should upgrade UMOPAR capabilities, as $22 million is earmarked for police and judicial drug suppression, and $3.5 million for increased intelligence capabilities.

Despite corruption that assists narco traffickers in eluding security forces, UMOPAR has scored several major successes against Bolivia's drug lords. This has included the capture of one of the leading cocaine traffickers in all of South America, Roberto Suarez Gomez (involved in the Garcia Meza affair) in 1988, and more recently Jose Ali Parada, one of Bolivia's five most wanted traffickers, in September 1989. In cooperation with UMOPAR, the DEA has launched a new drive with new tactics against illicit coca paste labs in Bolivia. The raids are conducted at night, using coordinated military style tactics, including simultaneous strikes from air, land, and water. The agents use UH-1 (Huey) helicopters and zodiac boats for insertion into the labs jungle hideaways.

Even with the new tactics the impediments presented by the jungle terrain offer significant obstacles for anti-drug forces. In a recent assault in Beni Province the new tactics were used in the attempt to find 10 coca paste labs. During the week of anti-drug operations only 3 labs were located and destroyed. The mixed results from this operation indicates the new tactics will need an extended period of evaluation.[107]

D. MILITARIZATION: THE POLITICAL DILEMMA

Just prior to the 1990 Cartagena drug summit, delegates from the United States, Bolivia, Peru, and Colombia met in Santa Cruz, Bolivia and reached a tentative agreement to include military units from each of the Andean countries armed forces in an escalated war on drugs. The issue had been a volatile one in the strategy debate on how to best conduct the narcotics war. The Andean nations have been reluctant to involve their armed forces in the drug war which has frustrated the United States in its efforts for a stepped-up drug campaign. It is an important issue for a number of reasons, which will now be outlined.

One reason is economic. All three of the coca-producing countries are experiencing economic difficulties, with Peru and Bolivia by far in the worst situation. The coca industry directly employs 200,000 to 300,000 people in each of the Andean countries, as well as supplying a significant portion of foreign exchange earnings.

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[107]Jehl, D., "U.S. Launches a New Drive against Illicit Cocaine Labs," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 May 1990.

With military involvement escalating the anti-narcotics campaign, a large pool of disaffected peasants could be created. This pool could supply a large support base for the various leftist insurgencies operating in Peru and Colombia, or contribute to social unrest due to government institutions not being able to handle the influx of unemployed.

The Andean nations also see using the military to fight narcotics as treating a symptom and not the cause. They are not totally opposed to escalating the drug war, but they have insisted on economic aid in conjunction with increased interdiction to ease the strain on those employed in the industry.

The United States is also missing an important point in insisting on the increased use of the military in fighting narcotics. The countries of Latin America have had a far different experience with their military institutions than has the United States. Bolivia has suffered some 180 military coups since gaining independence from Spain, and Peru in 1980 ended a 12 year period of military rule. The presidents of these countries have been careful in nurturing their fledgling democracies. Even Colombia, which has been fairly stable since the period of 'La Violencia' (1946-1958) needs to be cautious. It would not be the first time in Latin America that a country with a long democratic history experienced a coup in response to domestic unrest, a prime example being Uruguay, with the military taking over in response to the Tupamaro urban guerilla movement.

The fear, then, is that by accepting military aid along with the greater role of the military in the drug war, the relative position of the military in relation to civilian institutions is strengthened. It then should not have

surprised the United States that in May 1990 Peru's President Alan Garcia rejected the $35 million U.S aid plan that included the training of six Peruvian Army and Marine Battalions. The Battalions were to operate in the upper-Huallaga valley. Garcia stated that the war on drugs could not be won with military force alone, and that he would not sign any military agreement that did not include military aid. New Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori has expressed similar concerns over the U.S. aid package and has yet to ratify it.[108]

One last concern that the governments may have with the use of the military, is that it could increase the number of human rights violations. This has already occurred in areas where Colombian and Peruvian forces have been operating against guerrillas. If it were occur in the coca growing regions, with their substantial peasant populations, the guerilla movements could greatly enlarge their support base.

To their credit, though the Presidents of the supplying nations have been reluctant to militarize the drug war, to a certain extent they have realized a need to increase interdicting narcotics. Colombia was faced with a 'fait accompli' in involving its military. The drug violence had reached such a stage, that it called into question law enforcement ability to handle the crisis. Colombia has also held the military accountable for its performance in the drug war. In August 1990 Generals Jose Nelson Mejia (armed forces

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[108]Ray, M. R., "Peru Balks at U.S. Military-Aid Offer," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 3 May 1990. "Fujimori Comments on U.S. Aid, Military Changes," *FBIS-LAT-90-147*, 31 July 1990.

commander), Jesus Armando Arias Cabrales (commander of the army), and Alphonso Amaya Maldonado (commander of the air force), were fired by Colombian President Virgilio Barco and President elect Cesar Gaviria. A variety of explanations were espoused for the firings. These included, their tolerance of corruption, and the military's involvement in the dirty war. The explanations considered most likely though, were the military's inability to capture drug kingpin Pablo Escobar, and their failure to halt the wave of narco-terrorism.[109]

As noted earlier in this chapter Bolivia too seems to be increasing the role of its military in drug interdiction, though it is not clear exactly what their role will be. Considering the volatility of this issue in Bolivia, President Paz Zamora's announcement and the moving of troops into the Chapare is significant, though it may have been a superficial gesture to ensure U.S. aid. On the other hand, President Paz may actually intend an overt role for the armed forces, planning to prevent a Colombianization of his nation's drug war before the traffickers become the powerful threat that the Colombian cartels have become.

Peru is the only Andean nation that still actively resists the involvement of its armed forces in the drug fight. With the region's most serious insurgency threat in Sendero, it may have the most to lose if it drives the coca peasantry into the arms of the guerrillas. But like Colombia, Peru may be faced with a 'fait accompli'. If Sendero becomes an even greater threat, Peru

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[109]"Shake-up of Colombian Military," *Andean Group Report*, RA-90-0, 2 August 1990, p. 4.

may be forced to accept the training of the six battalions and the $35 million military aid package whether or not economic aid is included as part of the deal.

The militarization of the drug war is clearly a sensitive issue for the United States as well as for the countries of the Andean Region. Like all issues pertinent to the narcotics problem there are no simple or pat solutions. There seems to be no question that an aggressive interdiction campaign is one of the keys in attempting to bring the drug war to a successful conclusion. But it is a fallacy to consider militarization a cure all for the drug problem. Without a decrease in demand from the United States the best that an aggressive interdiction campaign can hope for is a temporary decline in the price of coca leaf. The economic question is also pertinent. The drug industry provides significant foreign exchange earnings for the Andean region, and without significant economic aid a military led eradication campaign cannot have a lasting effect on a peasantry totally reliant on coca for their livelihood. In addition there is a legitimate threat that a disaffected peasantry could become the decisive base that a movement like Sendero would need.

A full understanding of the narcotics problem faced by the Andean region is essential in implementing an effective anti-narcotics strategy. As this chapter shows the military solution to the problem, one advocated by the United States, is much more complex than may be realized in North America. With an increased understanding of the special dynamics existing in the Andean region, potential solutions that are effective as well as politically acceptable to both the United States and the 'first tier' nations can then be implemented.

IV. THE ECONOMIC IMPACT OF THE DRUG TRADE

The current U.S. supply side anti-narcotics effort favors a drug interdiction/eradication strategy as the best course of action in fighting the drug war. The purpose of this chapter is to examine the feasibility of such a strategy, by scrutinizing the narcotic industry's economic impact on the Andean region. The core of the chapter concerns a comparative study between the successful Mexican anti-narcotics campaign, in the 1970's, and the situation as it now exists in the Andean region. This chapter is not intended as an in-depth analysis of the Andean economies, rather it proposes to show the impact the narcotics trade has on the region's economies.

By doing so, it will become apparent that strategies must take into account long-term economic well-being in terms of overall regional stability.

A. MEXICO: A PYRRHIC VICTORY

Prior to the current concern with the inflow of illicit narcotics from the Andean region, Mexico was considered the primary origin of narcotics entering the United States, and was the center of focus for a U.S. drug interdiction program. Although the program was fairly successful, it would have unforeseen implications for the present American narcotics problem.

Initial U.S. concern with illicit drugs entering from Mexico occurred in the 1920's and 1930's. Although Mexico was a transshipment point for illegal narcotics entering the United States, it was soon looked at as a potential source of supply. By 1945 Mexican brown heroin was seized for the first time by U.S. drug enforcement authorities. By the 1960's Mexico had become a

major marijuana producer and by the 1970's Mexico dominated the illicit marijuana drug market in the United States.[110]

The U.S. demand for drugs, coupled with higher available incomes, generated opportunities for entrepreneurs and cash poor peasant farmers, who were willing to participate in the cultivation and processing of narcotics in order to increase their standard of living. During the 1970's a campesino in Northern Mexico could earn approximately $400 a year from cultivation of traditional crops. By cultivating opium poppy he could increase his income to between $2000 and $4000 per year.[111] This additional income could mean the difference between subsistence and relative economic well being for the campesino. Although the U.S. State Department recognized these basic economic facts and what they meant to the campesino, no concerted effort was made for a crop substitution program in Mexico.[112]

The Mexican narcotics industry was dominated by three organizations, the Herrera, Sicilia-Falcon, and Arauja groups. The profits generated by these illicit Mexican narcotics organizations were enormous. The drug lords sent the lions share of their profits back into Mexico, and had a tendency to utilize their economic gains to make investments in Mexico. The DEA estimated that at the time the Herrera group sent over $100 million to Durango, Mexico

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[110]Lupsha, P., "Drug Trafficking: Mexico and Colombia in Comparative perspective," *Journal of International Affairs*, (Spring/Summer, 1981), pp. 95-96.

[111]Ibid., p. 97.

[112]Ibid., p. 97.

over a four to five year period.[113] The Alberto Sicilia-Falcon organization for a period of three to four months sent $32 million per week to Mexico, and had bank deposits of $260 million in Sinoloa.[114] Between September 1975 and October 1978 the two Araujo groups sent more than $32 million to Mexico.[115] As such, during Mexico's dominance in supplying narcotics for U.S. markets, between $500 million to $1 billion in U.S. currency left the United States and entered the Mexican economy.[116]

The situation existing in Mexico during the middle to late 1970's is similar to the current situation in the Andean region, namely, the illicit narcotics industry generating massive amounts of foreign exchange, with a large amount finding its way back into the local economy. From the perspective of a Third World nation, the inflow of narco-dollars would then seem a benefit, so long as drug production was for export only, it could be tolerated.[117]

The difference between Mexico in the 70's and the current crisis in the Andean region is that the U.S./Mexican drug policy ultimately would be relatively successful, while the Andean outcome is still very much in doubt.

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[113]U.S. House, *Investigation of Narcotics Trafficking Proceeds*, p. 63.

[114]U.S. Congress and Senate Committee on Governmental Affairs, Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, Illegal Narcotics Profits. Hearings, 96th Congress, 1st Session, December 7, 11, 12, 13, and 14, 1979, p. 94.

[115]Ibid., p. 19.

[116]Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," pp. 100-101.

[117]Ibid., p. 101.

An important factor being the Mexican government's desire to crack down on marijuana and poppy producers, as well as drug traffickers. Mexico went from supplying 90% of heroin and 70% of marijuana consumed in the United States, to less than 30% of those drugs in 1980.[118]

Favored U.S. policies towards Mexico's war on drugs were similar to those being utilized or proposed today for the drug war in the Andean region. U.S. policy makers emphasized the use of cooperative agreements and joint operations, such as Janus, Condor, and the Trizo programs. These programs dealt with the drug problem from a supply side aspect. In addition, U.S. money and equipment was provided to finance high technology and an aerial spraying campaign which was to become an important cornerstone of the U.S. supply eradication strategy.[119]

By 1977 the massive influx of U.S. aid and technology, as well as greatly increased levels of cooperation from the Mexican government, was coupled with the use of paraquat to spray drug crops. The strategy soon began to pay dividends as there was a drop in demand for Mexican marijuana. At the same time improved interdiction, as well as supply eradication, lowered the purity and quality of the market for Mexican heroin.[120]

The seeming victory that emerged from this supply side campaign would prove to be short lived. With no slack in demand from U.S. markets other

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[118]Ibid., p. 97. U.S. Department of State, "International Narcotics Control," *Gist*, August 1980, p. 97.

[119]Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," pp. 96-97.

[120]Ibid., p. 96.

suppliers moved to fill the vacuum created by the successful Mexican campaign. By 1978 high grade Colombian marijuana, and increasingly cocaine, became the drugs of choice among the user North. Mexico returned to its previous status, as a way point for drug shipments entering the United States.[121]

Why did the supply side strategy work in Mexico? Similar to conditions currently existing in the Andean region, drug crops materially improved the standards of living of poor peasant farmers, and added badly needed foreign exchange dollars to the Mexican economy. Then it would seem Mexico's dilemma was the same facing Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia today. Several factors might account in part for the success of the supply side strategy in Mexico. First the PRI has been in power for over 60 years giving Mexico a strong sense of political stability. Through its infrastructure the Mexican government can make its will felt in every state of the Republic. Second, the Mexican resource base, the diversification and sophistication of its economy, as well as its per capita income (estimated at $1,160 in 1977 and at $2,100 in 1980), made it one of the more developed states in the third world. The relative affluence of Mexico enabled a less painful transition away from narco-dollar dependence. Third, the Mexican military has been traditionally subordinate to the government as well as integrated with the government. It does not act as a force outside the ruling regime. From a geo-political standpoint Mexico saw its image being tarnished by narco-trafficking, and

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[121]Ibid., pp. 97-105.

therefore jeopardizing its potential leadership role in the Caribbean Basin. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the narco-dollars entering the country were centered in a number of outlying states. This threatened to delegitimize the dominant centralized political position of the PRI. Jeopardizing the PRI's coveted political prerogative, galvanized it to greater efforts against the narcotics trade than otherwise may have been the case.[122]

B. THE DRUG TRADE MOVES TO THE ANDEAN REGION

With no decrease in the demand for illegal narcotics, and with a reduced supply from Mexico, satisfying the market in the U.S. dictated finding new suppliers. The Andean region (Colombia, Peru, Bolivia) provided an ideal alternative to Mexico. Geographically, Colombia was in perfect position as a transition point, while Peru and Bolivia, each with a long history of coca cultivation, could easily become the major source of raw coca paste.

Colombia's legal economy has traditionally relied on the export of coffee to generate the bulk of its hard currency earnings, though flowers have recently become an important hard currency source. Exporting primary products has been a traditional source of hard currency generation in Latin America, as well as a source of economic instability due to fluctuations in world market prices. At the time of Mexico's slide as the main U.S. supplier of narcotics (approximately 1977), Colombian per capita income stood at $710

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[122]Ibid., pp. 98-99.

making it one of the poorest developing countries in Latin America.[123] Along with its low per capita income Colombia suffered from one of the worst income distribution rates in South America, with some remote areas of the country barely being touched by the mainstream economy. These remote areas such as the Guajira Peninsula, as well as the Pasto and Leticia regions became the main coca paste processing regions, well outside the government's control or influence.[124]

With Colombia's domestic economic situation ripe for exploitation by the illegal drug market, domestic cultivation and processing made steady progress throughout the 70's, as shown by the amounts confiscated by Colombian law enforcement. In 1972 this amounted to 400 pounds of cocaine and 18 tons of marijuana, by 1975 the amounts had increased to 1 ton of cocaine and 164 tons of marijuana, and in 1982 the amount of cocaine being smuggled into the U.S. market had skyrocketed to 45 metric tons.[125] The combination of Colombia's economic situation, a rise in U.S. demand for cocaine, and eradication programs in Mexico as well as the Caribbean, had caused a geometric increase

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[123]Central Intelligence Agency, *National Basic Intelligence Fact-Book*, p. 41. Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," p. 103.

[124]Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," p. 103.

[125]Ibid., p. 104.

in Colombian drug smuggling.[126] Colombia now provides 70-80 percent of refined cocaine and 50-60 percent of marijuana available on the U.S. market.

The drastic increase in cocaine smuggling has had a profound effect on the Colombian economy, creating an enormous underground economy, with narco-dollars providing the bulk of its input. In 1979 it was estimated that $3 billion in foreign exchange entered the Colombian economy via drug trafficking, with $600 million to $700 million in the form of U.S. currency (which was an increase from $150 million earned in 1975). The amount of U.S. currency generated in the 70's has steadily climbed to where today it is estimated the Medellin cartel alone is reputed to earn $2 billion to $4 billion per year, and rivals many Fortune 500 companies in global reach.[127] With legal exports reaching $4 billion yearly it is obvious that narco-dollars are an important source of hard currency generation, with estimates that drugs provide 36 percent of Colombia's gross national product.[128]

With this large influx of narco-dollars the Colombian banking community had to adjust in order to handle the flow, establishing what was to be called the 'left handed window' for large currency transactions. This "window" enabled U.S. dollars to be converted into pesos and thereby

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[126]Ibid., p. 105. U.S., Congress, House, Select Committee on Narcotics Abuse and Control, *South American Study Mission*, 95th Cong., 1st Sess., 1977, p. 11.

[127]Bagley, B., "Colombia and the War on Drugs," *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1988, p. 72. Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," p. 106.

[128]Freemantle, B., *The Fix: Inside the World Drug Trade* (New York: Tom Doherty Associates, Inc., 1986), p. 78. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 45.

brought into the national economy. In 1980 it was estimated that one half of Colombia's international reserves originated from narco-dollar activity.[129]

Although there is some dispute as to how much of the narco-traffickers wealth is distributed within Colombia, there is little doubt that a substantial portion trickles down, to the benefit of a large segment of society. First, the Colombian construction industry has managed a growth rate well above the growth rate of the Gross Domestic Product. In 1980 the construction sector expanded at a substantial 9.7 percent, followed by 7.1 percent in 1981, 4.0 percent in 1982, and 5.1 percent in 1983.[130] The corresponding GDP growth rates were 4.2 percent, 2.3 percent, and 0.9 percent. The Colombian drug merchants have also donated money for low-income housing, charities, and public facilities. This gives them wide support from the populace, as well as relieving the Colombian government from providing these services.[131]

Second, the drug industry has also affected the wages of Colombia's agricultural workers: a field hand on coffee, cotton, tobacco, or banana plantations made $3 to $4 dollars per day; in contrast, in the marijuana fields he could earn $7 to $8 dollars per day. Indians who have traditionally been outside the main stream economy, can now earn 100 pesos per trip ferrying

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[129]"Banking Superintendent's Speech on "La Ventanilla Siniestra," *FBIS: Latin America*, 3 June 1980. Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," p. 107.

[130]*Economic and Social Progress in Latin America: Natural Resources*, (Washington: Inter-American Development Bank, 1983 Report), p. 236. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 45.

[131]MacDonald, *Volcano*, p. 45.

narcotics out to waiting mother ships. Finally, employment in the drug industry has been estimated at 500,000 Colombians. This is a far cry from the 100,000 to 150,000 employed in the narcotics trade in the mid-1970's. This large employment industry has therefore been able to function as an important buffer for the Colombian economy, especially the agricultural sector, with its fluctuating dependence on world markets. Overall, cocaine and marijuana have been able to absorb unemployment from the legitimate economy and forestall possible social unrest.[132]

Though the economic impact of the narcotics trade is serious in Colombia, it is more so for both Bolivia and Peru. From 1981 through 1986, Bolivia suffered through a severe economic crisis. In 1981 and 1982 Bolivia's GDP contracted by more than 9 percent. Inflation began a steady rise from 123.5 percent in 1982, to 11,750 percent in 1985, reaching the astounding level of over 30,000 percent in 1986.[133] In 1983 bad weather hurt the agricultural sector, and falling commodity prices in 1984 and 1985 had a detrimental effect

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[132]Bagley, B., "The Colombian Connection: The Impact of Drug Traffic on Colombia," in *Coca and Cocaine: Effects on People and Policy in Latin America*, ed. D. Pacini and C. Franquemont (Petersborough: Transcript Printing Co., 1986), p. 99. Martin, E. G., "Colombian Gold: Guajira Peninsula Becomes Chief Source of Marijuana for U.S.," *The Wall Street Journal*, 28 November 1978, p. 1. Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," P. 108. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 45.

[133]Hybel, A. R., "America's Immersion in Drugs has Lifted Bolivia from its Misery," *Los Angeles Times*, 25 September 1989, and *Economic and Social Progress in Latin America 1987 Report*, (Inter-American Development Bank), p. 238. MacDonald, *Volcano*, p. 58.

on the mining and industrial sectors.[134] Subsequent to elections in 1985, the newly elected Victor Paz administration was confronted with an ever worsening economic situation. Bolivia traditionally had been a large exporter of tin. But, in October of 1985, tin prices collapsed sending Bolivia's economy into a worsening tailspin. These economic setbacks deeply cut into the country's economic base, forcing the government to borrow, thereby raising its external debt burden. In 1980 Bolivia had found its $3 billion external debt burden impossible to service, by 1985 its external debt had risen to over $3.7 billion.[135]

With Bolivia's economic problems, the capacity of the legal economy to provide jobs and income was severely reduced. This was compounded by the fact that Bolivia was already one of the poorest nations in the Western Hemisphere, with a per capita income of only $470.[136] As in Colombia the coca growing industry provided a lucrative alternative to the newly unemployed Bolivians. In Bolivia no other agricultural product generated the same income as coca. The Chapare valley in central Bolivia produces most of the coca grown in the country. Approximately 30,000 to 40,000

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[134]McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 58.

[135]*External Debt Statistics: The Debt and other External Liabilities of Developing, CMEA and Certain other Countries and Territories*, (Paris: Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (1987), p. 16. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 58-59.

[136]McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 52. World Bank, *World Bank Development Report 1987* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 202.

families eke out an existence in the area.[137] In a good year a cocaine cultivator can earn $2,500 per hectare (2.5 acres), where as he could only earn $200 per year growing soya. This disparity is reflected in the increase in the amount of land under coca cultivation, from 85,000 acres in 1985 to 130,000 acres in 1989.[138] Given the economic multiplier effect on the economy it is estimated that about 300,000 Bolivians live off coca growing and its early processing stage.[139] Of the $1.5 billion generated by coca and the cocaine economy around $600 million stays in country, a figure roughly equal to Bolivia's legal exports.[140]

In Peru, like Bolivia, coca cultivation has become an important part of the economy, generating approximately $600 million annually.[141] In 1987 between 98,000-120,000 metric tons of coca leaves were cultivated accounting for 55 percent of the world's cocaine.[142] Coca, as in Bolivia, is a traditional crop which is indigenous to Indian culture and has been cultivated for

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[137]Barham, J., "Bolivia's Withdrawal Pain," *Financial Times of London*, 15 February 1990.

[138]Painter, J., "Bolivia Seeks U.S. Aid to Strengthen its Economy," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 15 February 1990.

[139]Ibid.

[140]Ibid.

[141]Monahan, J, "Peru," *The Latin American and Caribbean Review 1987*, (Harmondsworth, United Kingdom World of Information, 1987), p. 121. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 61.

[142]Riding, A., "Peru's Forces Press Ahead in Drug War," *The New York Times*, 17 August 1986, p. A12.

centuries, though the industry did not fully develop until external demand was stimulated in the 1970's. As in Bolivia, cocaine production is often the sole source of revenue in many isolated areas of Peru, the main growing region being the Upper Huallaga Valley. It was estimated in 1986 that 100,000 peasant families lived entirely off the income produced from coca plantations which covered an area of over 125,000 acres.[143]

C. IMPLICATIONS FOR SUPPLY SIDE ERADICATION

Given the U.S emphasis on supply side eradication, we must examine the effects that this immensely profitable underground economy has on the governments involved. These effects may make an interdiction/eradication program extremely difficult to implement.

In examining the governments of Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, the question needs to be asked: Is it in their best interests to bring an end to the narcotics industry? This question must be looked at not only from a purely economic standpoint, but from a political one as well.

On the surface Colombia's economy looks as if it would be in the best shape to be weaned off reliance on narco-dollars. In the Andean region it is considered to have the healthiest and best managed economy. In addition, despite $1.2 billion narco-dollars circulating in Colombia, the Colombian government has managed to restrict the impact of narcotrafficking on the economy. Some economists have stated that with cautious and proper

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[143]Strung, D. L., "The Foreign Policies of Cocaine: Comments on a Plan to Eradicate the Coca Leaf in Peru," in *Coca and Cocaine*, ed. Pacini and Franquemont, p. 78. McDonald, *Volcano*, p. 61.

management, Colombia could emerge economically well off without the narcotics industry.[144] Observers who believe that Colombia would not be severely hurt by the loss of the narcotics trade point to a variety of factors to support their conclusion. First, Colombia's GNP of $35-$40 billion breaks down as follows: coffee providing 30 percent, oil 30 percent, minor exports (agriculture and light industrial products) 30 percent, and what is called the underground economy providing 10 percent of which drugs accounts for only 2-3 percent.[145] Second, of the $6 billion Colombia earns in foreign exchange, $1.2 billion comes from drugs. A substantial amount to be sure, but not one that the Colombians could not live without. Finally, it is pointed out that most of the economic gains generated by the drug trade does not find its way back into the Colombian economy. It is estimated that of the $4 billion grossed annually less than half is brought back into the country, and of the amount brought back, 70-80 percent is spent on luxury goods. Thus it is believed Colombian's will not suffer economically from an end to the narco-trade.[146]

Overall, these factors suggest that the Colombian economy could weather the loss of the drug industry. However, it would be naive to think that its loss would be inconsequential, and that the Colombian government is not aware of this fact. For one thing the "multiplier effect" expands the 20,000 to

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[144]Freed, "Colombia Likely to Survive Loss of Drug Money," *Los Angeles Times*, 8 September 1989.

[145]Ibid.

[146]Ibid.

30,000 who work directly in the drug trade to 500,000 whose jobs are affected in one way or another by the narcotics industry. One American trained Colombian financial expert argues that the costs to Colombia would be tremendous if the narcotics industry were to be shut down suddenly: it would destroy 5 or 6 years of work, about what it took for Colombia to recover from its last recession in 1984-1985.[147] While experts point out that the overall drug income figure is low compared to the country's total worth, regional effects must be considered when contemplating an end to the narcotics trade. Areas where the drug business is concentrated already confront unemployment rates of 12-16 percent. In addition, the loss of $1.2 billion in narco-dollars might be inflationary causing the price of imports to increase, raising the price of consumer goods, as well as products required for domestic industries.[148]

Although the situation is serious in Colombia, there is some room for optimism. Bolivia and Peru present a different picture. Bolivia's economy is much more dependent on coca cultivation, with the narcotics industry being the mainstay of the nation's economy. Coca leaf is the nation's major export, and largest source of dollar reserves. The approximately $600 million that is brought in annually from coca leaf production is enough to pay the whole public sector payroll, according to U.S. and Bolivian government statistics.[149] Bolivian officials are well aware of how important the cocaine industry has

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[147]Ibid.

[148]Ibid.

[149]Germani, C., "Drug Lords and Public on Collision Path in Bolivia," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 10 August 1988.

been for the country, most households sport television antennas as well as the latest models of small trucks or Jeeps. Some observers feel that the revitalization of Bolivia's cities, with buildings and homes being constructed at an unprecedented rate is directly attributed to the drug trade.[150]

With unemployment hovering at around 25 percent and having to endure the austerity measures that has reduced the annual inflation rate from a raging 24,000 percent to 10 percent, it would almost be impossible for Bolivia to replace such a large component of its economy. Two Bolivian businessmen perhaps best sum up the importance of cocaine to Bolivia, stating "without cocaine, Bolivia would not have been able to rise from its misery."[151]

Peru's situation is even more complex than Bolivia's. Peru is suffering not only from dire economic conditions, but also from the threat of one of the more vicious guerilla organizations in the world, the 'Sendero Luminoso.'[152] The populist policies of former Peruvian President Alan Garcia has left Peru's economy in a severe situation. In trying to stimulate economic growth Garcia used up the nation's dollar reserves. Peruvian industry can not now obtain the foreign exchange necessary to buy essential foreign components to manufacture goods.[153] The result of the Peru's mismanagement of the

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[150]Hybel, "America's Immersion."

[151]Ibid.

[152]McCormick, "Shining ."

[153]Germani, C., "Peruvian Leader Battles Political, Economic Woes," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 28 July 1988.

economy has been a shrinking of the Gross Domestic Product by 28 percent in the first quarter of 1990, an inflation rate at 5,000 percent, and 50 percent of Peru's work force unemployed or underemployed.[154]

Given the dynamics of the current economic crisis, Peru, like Bolivia, would confront severe economic difficulties without its narco-dollars. The narcotics industry has helped absorb the unemployed. The U.S. embassy has estimated that unemployed workers from as far away as Lima have appeared in the Upper Huallaga Valley as coca growers. Coca also generates badly needed foreign currency that Peru requires.[155] In addition to the direct threat from Sendero Luminoso, the government must rely on coca employment to prevent the unemployed from becoming so discontented that they will begin actively supporting the movement.

Now to return to the question: Are the Andean governments being as cooperative as they should in trying to bring an end to the drug industry? It is acknowledged by government officials that the narcotics industry has fostered narco-terror from traffickers, as well as Marxist guerrilla groups, both of which are threatening the legitimacy of Colombian and Peruvian governments. Nevertheless the economic and political conditions outlined in this thesis have suggested government officials may not always feel sufficient incentive to cooperate fully in a supply side

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[154]Nunn, S., and Lieberman, J., "Hooked on Coca," *The Washington Post*, 14 February 1990.

[155]Schmidt, C., "Misfires in the Drug War: U.S. Weapons Won't Cure Coca Belt Poverty," *The Washington Post*, 3 September 1989.

eradication/substitution strategy, The example of the Cali Cartel, in Colombia, illustrates the lack of full resolve on the part of a source country's government to fully implement a crack down against the cartels: while the Colombian government has been persecuting the Medellin cartel, the equally powerful Cali cartel (both cartels together supply 80 percent of the U.S. cocaine market) has almost escaped notice. The Medellin organization being much more violent, and making attempts at entering the political arena, was seen as much more of a threat to governmental legitimacy. The Colombian government then had the incentive to crack down on them. The Cali cartel is seen as a much more benign and sophisticated organization. Eschewing the violence characterized by the Medellin cartel, the Cali cartel has chosen to buy into the system. Most people do not even know the names of the Cali cartels leaders, and they have been ignored by the Colombian government during the crack down.[156]

In assessing the benefits of the successful supply side interdiction/eradication campaign in Mexico during the seventies several domestic strengths were noted: First, a stable political system as manifested by the powerful PRI; second, Mexico's economic diversification and resource base made it one of the more developed states in the Third World; third, the Mexican government through the PRI could make its will felt in every state of the republic, and fourth the Mexican government had the will to

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[156]Farah, D., "Cali Drug Cartel Avoids Crackdown," *The Washington Post*, 15 October 1989.

crackdown on the marijuana and poppy producers.[157] These factors in one degree or another are missing from the present situation in the Andean region. Consequently a one dimensional campaign based on an interdiction/eradication/substitution program may be impossible to conclude successfully. Though eradication/substitution will be an important aspect of the supply side battle it must be coupled with a comprehensive economic package that is tailored to each country's needs and circumstances. By coupling an economic strategy with interdiction the Andean governments will then have a viable alternative to the narcotics industry. Therefore a political and economic solution presents itself.

D. U.S. STRATEGY PERCEPTIONS

One sign of encouragement, if on a small scale, are indications that some Andean campesinos are willing to become part of crop substitution programs. In Bolivia in December 1989 and January 1990, 1,266 hectares (2.5 acres) were eradicated in the Chapare coca growing region. This compares with 2,504 hectares for the whole of last year. By February 16, 1990 a further 474 hectares had been eradicated, and at that rate, the Bolivian government could reach its 1990 eradication target of 6,000 acres.[158] In addition, a United Nations sponsored aid program has shown some signs of success in both Colombia and Peru. In Peru the U.N. program has grown from a membership of

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[157]Lupsha, "Mexico and Colombia," p. 98.

[158]Painter, J., "Bolivian Coca Growers Voluntarily Eradicate Crop as Price Drops," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 21 February 1990.

around 2,500 to approximately 20,000, and in Colombia around 9,000 families have signed up for the program.[159] The Bolivian effort involves the state eradication agency (DIRECO) registering each peasant who then receives $2,000 from the government for each hectare eradicated, the monetary amount being somewhat comparable to what the campesino could earn from a hectare of coca. The U.N. program emphasizes education, self-awareness, and a will to change, brought about by farmers being fed up with the violence associated with the narcotics trade.[160] The program teaches farmers to grow other crops allowing them to gradually make the shift from coca.[161]

The actual amount of acreage eradicated and families involved with crop substitution programs is small compared to total acreage under coca cultivation, and the total number of families growing coca. But of great interest campesinos seem to be more amenable to switches to alternative crops when the price of coca leaf is low. This, it seems, is what happened recently in the Bolivian case. During the recent slump in coca prices, the price of a 100 pound bag has fallen from $60 in January 1989, to as little as $5 now. With $30 a bag being considered the break even price to make economically worth while for a farmer to grow coca.

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[159]Ross, T., "U.N. Aid Helps Some Colombians Shake Free of Coca Dependency," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 5 January 1988., and Stevenson, S., "In Peru Coca Plan Succeeds," *the Miami Herald*, 9 October 1989.

[160]Painter, "Coca Growers Eradicate Crops."

[161]Ibid.

The reason the price of coca slumped, has implications for the coordinated strategy that is needed to make an eradication strategy work. The primary reason prices slumped is due to a decreased demand coming from the coca processing regions in Colombia. The Colombian government, under pressure from the United States, had stepped up its campaign against coca processing laboratories. This effectively caused a drop in demand for coca paste, which in turn caused the price in the growing regions to fall below the break even point for cultivators.

The second factor to consider in a coordinated substitution/eradication campaign is the availability of legitimate alternate crops for cultivators and a market available for the export of substitute crops. Forced eradication is unlikely to be successful unless the Peruvian and Bolivian growers have some other source of income besides growing coca leaf. In addition, the growers in Bolivia and Peru are extremely well organized, enabling them to effectively resist forced eradication. The situation is further complicated in Bolivia due to the fact that there is an almost total lack of economic infrastructure to support alternate crops. Most legitimate crops spoil before getting to market due to the lack of storage facilities and transportation corridors. Consideration must also be made that any substitute may take several years before becoming profitable. Ample credit will have to be provided to see growers through. Thus, a United States economic strategy not only must help ensure a viable market for substitute crops, it must also assist a country like Bolivia in building the infrastructure necessary for those alternate crops.

Another serious area of contention on a U.S. economic strategy in the drug war, is the often unilateral decision making and lack of overall coordination involved in economic decisions made by the U.S. involving the Andean region. This has been particularly evident in U.S./Colombia relations. In July 1989 the United States let expire the 74 member nation International Coffee Agreement. The Agreement ensured a fixed price on coffee, which then helped Colombia earn hard currency from its main legitimate export. Earning hard currency assisted Colombia in its battle against the narcotics industry.[162] U.S. reasoning for withdrawing support for the 27 year old agreement made sound market sense, the agreement led to excessively high prices and restricted access to good quality coffee beans. However once free of the trade quotas established under the old accord a world glut caused the price of coffee to plunge more than 40 percent between July 1989 and October 1989. The expiration of this agreement was counterproductive to the war on drugs. Not taking into consideration the effects on Colombia, and the effects on that country's ability to fight the drug war. Without the accord Colombia confronts a potential loss of between $300-$500 million per year in foreign services. The magnitude of this loss is likely to weaken the governments anti-drug posture.

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[162]Treaster, J. B., "Coffee Impasse Imperils Colombia's Drug Fight," *The New York Times*, 24 September 1989.

In another recent action the U.S. Commerce Department threatened Colombia's $200 million export trade in cut flowers.[163] In a January 1990 decision, the Commerce Department accused the Colombian cut flower industry of dumping their product on the U.S. market to drive out competition, and is considering increasing import duties on cut flowers from 4.47 percent to 8.5 percent. Colombians see this U.S. action as an attempt to drive their cut flower industry out of business, just when they need to diversify their exports to assist them in the anti-drug war.[164]

These decisions were not made in the political caldron with U.S. domestic politics, special interests, and economic concerns playing significant roles. But two striking points did emerge in regards to these two economic decisions: First, although the Bush administration did show concern over the Commerce Department's decision, U.S. trade laws make it impossible for other governmental agencies to intervene on grounds other than the narrow economic issues at stake, as in the flower dispute; and second, in Senate hearings on the drug war, drug policy director William Bennett and a State Department narcotics official testified that they were not even consulted about the coffee negotiations.[165] At the same hearings the Colombian ambassador to the United States expressed frustration at U.S. policy of

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[163]Passel, P., "Fighting Cocaine with Coffee, Flowers," *The New York Times*, 20 September 1989.

[164]Isikoff, M., "Colombian President Complains to Bush about U.S. Policies," *Washington Post*, 13 February 1990.

[165]Isikoff, "Colombian President."

simultaneously urging an end to the drug industry while permitting a collapse of the International Coffee Agreement.[166] The shortcomings shown here suggest broad changes in U.S. decision-making are of critical importance to the overall drug strategy. First, there needs to be better coordination between the various agencies within the U.S. that are making decisions regarding the Andean region; second, the U.S. should move away from unilateral decision-making and make these economic issues a multilateral effort, and third the United States needs to set its economic priorities.

If the drug war is a serious threat then is it more important for U.S. policy makers to make economic decisions strictly in accordance with free market interests? Perhaps the U.S. should make political and economic decisions that will enable the Andean countries to wean themselves away from the narcotics industry even if those decisions involve a temporary lapse from free market priorities.

E. IMPLICATIONS FOR U.S. STRATEGY

Given the current international situation and the shrinking amount of U.S. foreign aid funds available, there is great debate as to where the United States should concentrate its global economic efforts. Do we wish to aid Eastern Europe as it distances itself from communism, assist Gorbachev and the Soviet Union as it attempts a transition to a market oriented economy, utilize our assets domestically, or fight the war on narcotics by assisting the Andean region away from its dependence on the drug industry?

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[166]Nunn and Lieberman, "Hooked."

Currently there is $14 billion dollars in the U.S. budget earmarked for foreign aid programs, of which $261 million is destined for the Andean region.[167] According to current estimates much more will be needed to make any kind of impact in the region. Colombia estimates that it will need $250 million a year in direct U.S. aid for the next 2 to 5 years to soften the impact of losing the $1.2 billion in drug money. Colombia is currently receiving $65 million in emergency military assistance from the U.S. with the U.S. offering a further $90.2 million in military and police aid.[168]

Anibel Aguiler, President of the Interamerican Commission for the Control of Substance Abuse of the OAS conducted a study estimating that in Bolivia an integrated eradication and substitution program would cost $670 million over 5 years.[169] Currently, Bolivia receives $100 million per year in U.S. aid including $15 million for drug interdiction and only $10 million for crop substitution programs.[170] In addition, Peru also currently receives approximately $100 million per year to fight the drug war. Both Peru and Bolivia have asked the United States for $500 million per year in aid to fight the drug war.[171] Although the estimates for the economic costs may be too high and the amounts the respective governments are asking for in weaning

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[167]Nunn and Lieberman, "Hooked."

[168]Freed, "Loss of Drug Money."

[169]Farah, "Cocaine Troubles."

[170]Ibid.

[171]Schmidt, "Misfires."

their economies away from narcotics dependency may be unrealistic, it seems clear that current U.S. economic efforts are inadequate to make a substantial impact in the drug war. The piecemeal fashion in which we are currently throwing our money at the problem is making little impact. It is just being swallowed up by the enormous scope of the narcotics trade.

What is needed is a long-term outlook in developing the Andean economies. Colombia already has a broad economic base and mainly needs the proper support to soften the blow in removing itself from the narcotics industry. Bolivia and Peru lack a proper economic infrastructure and will need long-term economic nurturing to see them through the narcotics crisis.

In summary, this chapter has attempted to show that the U.S./Mexican interdiction/ eradication strategy in the 1970's did in fact work, but due to circumstances unique to Mexico. In applying the same strategy to the Andean Region, the U.S. could be making a fundamental error. By assuming that the particular economic and political dynamics are similar to both cases, the U.S. Andean strategy could well invite failure.

The contention of this chapter is that the Andean interdiction/eradication strategy must be combined with economic development in order to succeed. Currently the Andean region can ill afford, and government officials probably do not want to see, an immediate end to the narcotics industry. The combined strategy that has been outlined should help provide the safety valve for the Andean governments to muster the necessary political will to wean their economies away from the narcotics industry. The focus of the thesis will now shift to a specific evaluation of current U.S. strategies.

V. CURRENT "DRUG WAR" STRATEGY

It was in the mid 1980's that President Reagan officially launched his campaign against the growing narcotic threat. In the early years it would be accurate to label this campaign as little more than rhetorical politics; a game that became increasingly dangerous for the foot soldiers whose job has always been to control the narco markets. Initially there was no "national drug control strategy," fiscal support, coordination between agencies or even clear objectives outlined by the President. By the late 1980's however, the President's anti-drug campaign had become the "war on drugs" complete with a drug czar, William Bennett. It was Bennett, who for the first time, expressed a number of objectives and demonstrated to the United States that the government was serious in its desire to eradicate the drug problem.

At the outset, the Office of National Drug Control Policy struggled for survival in the bureaucratic jungles of Washington. It was criticized for lack of cohesion, and failure both to define the problem clearly and subsequently provide the people with a national strategy. Even today, this office is ambiguous in the chain-of-command and, until recently, had little budget support. Credit should thus be given for the way in which it has gained recognition.

Succumbing to the pressures of Congress and the White House, the first *National Drug Control Strategy* was released in 1989. Before reviewing the *National Drug Control Strategy,* it is important to note that regardless of its shortcomings, no other political institution has published a similar document. In Congress the issue has been debated both in the House and the

Senate and it is clear that the issue is gaining more attention. However a parallel strategy has yet to be published.[172] Since the Administration's *National Drug Control Strategy* stands alone as the current plan of action, it will be examined in detail.

In the introduction of the 1989 *National Drug Control Strategy,* William Bennett illustrates the magnitude of the drug problem in the United States. His data, collected from the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), serves as a preface and perhaps a justification for the strategy that follows. The following areas are highlighted because above and beyond the multidimensional nature of the narcotics issue, they are perceived as indicators that the drug problem is getting out of control.

> Crime: Three fourths of all robberies and half of all felony assaults committed by young people now involve drug users. Reports of bystander deaths due to drug related gunfights and drive by shootings also continue to climb.
>
> Health: ...The number of drug-related emergency hospital admissions increased by 121 percent between 1985 and 1988. As many as 200,000 babies are born to mothers who use drugs.
>
> Economy: ...One U.S. Chamber of Commerce estimate puts annual drug sales at $110 billion--more than double all the profits enjoyed by all the Fortune 500 companies combined.[173]

This data is no more striking than that which is found throughout this thesis, in the morning newspaper, or on the evening news hour. This type of

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[172]The role of Congress will be discussed later in this chapter.

[173]The White House, *National Drug Control Strategy,* (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, September 1989), p. 1-2.

information prefaces almost all reports on the "drug war" and has yet to dull the senses. Bennett effectively uses the data to paint a bleak picture in defense of his methodology.

The Administration's "drug control strategy" can be divided into a two pronged approach involving "supply" and "demand" areas of concern. This approach is needed because of the economic nature of the narcotics problem. In supply side tactics, the enemy, predominantly in Latin America, is the focus and his market is the target of elimination. It is believed that eradicating drugs at the source will ultimately result in less of a problem for the domestic U.S. population or the demand side of the equation as a whole.

The "demand" approach, so named because of the consumers desire for the product, is much more amorphous. It includes many politically sensitive subjects such as treatment, education, over-crowded prisons, increased health risks, crime and the functions of the justice system. Theoretically in a purely demand side strategy the focus would be on eliminating the consumers desire for narcotics, and with attention given the aforementioned areas, completely eliminate the profit in narcotrafficking. Obviously any serious strategy involves blending both the supply side and demand side tactics into a single effort. This, in fact, has been accomplished. The controversy, however, comes from the degree to which each of these strategies, "supply" or "demand" are applied. The Bush administration and the Office of National Drug Control Policy have focused their primary attention on supply side tactics or eliminating narcotics at the source. In all fairness it should be noted that the administration has shifted more emphasis on the demand side equation, partly as a result of criticisms of previous strategies. However the

scales are still tipped in favor of the supply side approach. These facts will become more clear in the review of the 1990 *National Drug Control Strategy*.

A. THE *NATIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY*

1. Supply Side Specifics:

International efforts and all forms of interdiction fall into the supply side category. However, domestic interdiction carries qualities of both strategic approaches. This point is important when outlining the specific plans because in real terms domestic interdiction interrupts the supply side of narcotics at the final distribution points, yet the coordination and funding of domestic law enforcement agencies would be identified as a demand requirement.

Focusing further on international efforts and international interdiction it becomes apparent that the narcotics issue transcends many areas of political concern. Whereas the main concern would appear to be narcotrafficking, other items of equal importance are deeply intertwined. As a consequence the supply side strategy is tantamount to a pyramid with eradication of narcotics at its apex. Moving down the pyramid towards the base, other items of interest include, political and economic stability, foreign relations, trade agreements, security agreements and even ideological differences, all of which make up the foundation of the structure illustrated. Each influences the other and subsequently all must be dealt with, or at least considered simultaneously.

Therefore the national strategy consists of three primary near-term goals in the international arena. The first goal is to strengthen the political will and institutional capabilities of Colombia, Bolivia and Peru.[174] Each country is considered separately due to the varying degrees of institutional stability and economic capability. The second goal is to strengthen the law enforcement and military activities of the three primary actors against the cocaine trade.[175] Enhancing their capabilities is being accomplished through the use of both law enforcement and military advisors and with the supply of an assortment of hardware. Currently the hardware includes everything from communications equipment to small arms weaponry and ammunition and in some cases even aircraft. The degree to which this effort has been applied varies from country to country. Colombia has received the most equipment and assistance and appears to be sincere in the fight against the major cartels. Peru, on the other hand, continues under the Alan Garcia tradition in refusing most of the assistance offered by the United States. Peru's rejection in part is a reflection of the different light in which they see the "drug war."

The second goal is to provide acquired and real time intelligence. In reaching the second goal a myriad of United States agencies have been employed to provide better coordination and timely processing of information. These particular assistances are not usually provided in country

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[174]White House, *Strategy*, p. 50.

[175]Ibid., p. 50.

and consequently pose the least risk, in so far as they do little to upset international harmony within the region.

The third goal is to inflict significant damage to the narcotraffickers within the four major countries of Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Mexico. This is accomplished by working with the individual governments in disrupting or dismantling trafficking operations.[176] This goal involves sensitive coordination between all players involved. The idea is to incapacitate the major traffickers and their lieutenants through arrests, prosecution and when necessary extradition. Additional damage will be inflicted by the destruction of cocaine producing laboratories and eliminating coca and marijuana crops. As these crops are destroyed and the trafficking is dismantled, it then becomes an additional requirement to provide a form of substitution to fill the economic vacuum and maintain economic and political stability.

Keeping the three primary goals in consideration, efforts have been expanded further to encompass the major transit areas of Mexico, the Caribbean, Central America and the Pacific. Monitoring, surveillance, and interdiction in these areas is coordinated through the Joint Information Collection Center (JICC) and Joint Task Force Five (JTF 5) in El Paso Texas. The purpose of these coordinating centers is to provide more cohesion between the different agencies and military services involved. The DEA, as directed by the President and Congress, will continue to be the chief

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[176]Ibid., p. 51.

coordinating agency and will direct the operations of all agencies and military services.

Another element of the international effort, which again spills over into the demand arena, is the money laundering activities.

The Administration's money laundering strategy seeks to attain three primary goals: the prosecution and incarceration of money launderers and the leaders and members of drug trafficking organizations; the freezing, seizure, or confiscation of drug derived assets; and the deterrence of individuals or institutions from cooperating with money launderers or their clients through the enforcement of existing laws and regulations where needed, and certainty of sanctions in the event of non-compliance.[177]

As a result the Administration created the Drug-Related Financial Crimes Policy Group with a "Financial Targeting Group" which will be responsible for the investigation and subsequent prosecution of identified violators.

Collecting these goals together the current Administration has made an effort to present the National strategy to the major Latin American governments. President Bush has consulted with the United Nations and continually seeks approval from this forum on all aspects of the international effort. In addition, the President desires a continuation of the "drug summit" process between the United States and the concerned Latin American governments.

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[177]Ibid., p. 59.

The international effort continues to expand and become more costly in the long run as the narcotrafficking nexus contracts and expands under pressures applied from various points. Brazil, Argentina, Ecuador and Chile are now becoming more of a concern.

In summary of the International Efforts, the following "Highlights" have been given by the Office of National Drug Control Policy:

International Highlights

- Increased economic, military, and law enforcement assistance to Colombia, Peru and Bolivia.
- Expanded cooperation with Mexico in drug enforcement,money laundering disruption, drug interdiction and demand reduction programs.
- Continued support for law enforcement programs in South America producer and transit countries, including Ecuador, Venezuela, Paraguay, Argentina, and Chile.
- Continued cooperative law enforcement and intelligence programs with Central America and Caribbean.
- Development of an international strategy focused on opium and heroin.
- Broadened domestic and foreign efforts to counter international drug money laundering activities.
- Expanded efforts to reduce the illegal manufacture and shipment of chemicals essential to illicit drug production.
- Promotion of international law enforcement cooperation through Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties and the pursuit of anti-drug initiatives at international forums.[178]

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[178]Ibid., p. 47.

2. Interdiction

The 1990 *National Drug Control Strategy* proposes a total of $2.4 billion for interdiction efforts with the goal of deterring drug smuggling through interception and seizure of drug shipments. This sum allows for continuation of current levels of operation and enhances programs focuses on the problem of the Southwestern U.S.- Mexican Border.

Interdiction is divided into the three primary areas of air, maritime, and land, and involves the coordination of law enforcement agencies, the U.S. Coast Guard and the Department of Defense. In air interdiction suspected narcotrafficking aircraft are detected through the use of two primary radar systems, radar on board platforms such as aerostats or aircraft, and ground based radar. The combination of current and planned Land Based Aerostats (LBA's) and sea based aerostats will provide coverage of the U.S.-Mexican border, the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. In addition new legislation is being sought to provide legal accommodations for intercepting aircraft to "force down" suspected narcotics carrying aircraft.[179] Maritime interdiction primarily concerns the U.S. Coast Guard and on occasion the Coast Guard aboard U.S. Navy Vessels. With cooperation of Naval Task Forces the Coast Guard can essentially bottle up maritime traffic in the Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico. The Pacific coast waterway provides a much different case for both air and sea interdiction simply due to the vastness of this ocean and the U.S. coastline. In maritime interdiction the

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[179]Ibid., p. 67.

Coast Guard, when embarked aboard U.S. Navy vessels, had all arresting powers and under no circumstances are DoD personnel allowed to pursue civil arrests. This procedure is in accordance with constitutional provisions and both the Administration and Congress have sought to ensure that the role of the military in interdiction remain so limited. For the two to five year objectives, outlined in the National Strategy, land interdiction is receiving the most attention. The border has become the major avenue for narcotrafficking in the past decade. Unlike marijuana, cocaine is much easier to conceal and significantly more compact. In addition the border cannot be effectively "sealed" against increasing or outgoing traffic. Indeed several such proposals have generated heated political debates within the U.S. and Mexico. As a result the Administration is seeking to significantly increase the manpower of the border patrol and custom agents, in part with augmentation of DoD personnel. The increase in manpower requires an increase in coordination and intelligence capabilities which will be directed through JTF-5 in El Paso, Texas.

As noted before interdiction overlaps into the demand side of the equation and can not be neatly isolated into a specific strategy. A bullet summary of Interdiction Efforts as outlined by the Office of National Drug Control Policy follows:

Interdiction Highlights

- Enhanced and expanded role for the Department of Defense in Detection and Monitoring. (Emphasis ours)
- Improved coordination of air, land, and maritime interdiction efforts to deter and intercept drug smuggling and the illegal shipment of drug-related money, munitions and precursor chemicals as they enter or leave the country.

- Increased focus on drug smuggling across the Southwest border.
- Improved automated data processing equipment for use by the U.S. Customs Service, the Immigration and Naturalization Service and the U.S. Coast Guard.
- Completion of the Command, Control, Communications, and Intelligence (C3I) systems, and their integration with the Department of Defense Task Forces.[180]

3. Demand Specifics

The demand approach to fighting the war on drugs includes three major categories, the criminal justice system, drug treatment and rehabilitation and education. Although the Administration's strategy focuses more attention on supply side solutions, there is growing recognition for the need to address domestic problems as well. Analyzing the demand component of the drug war is more difficult because there are infinitely more variables, and unlike foreign affairs, tend to be more economically and politically sensitive.

In the criminal justice system, already overburdened, there has been a tendency to look upon drug related crimes as less severe than other felonious activities. The average incarceration period for drug offenders across the board is twenty-two months. This is less than time served for robbery, aggravated assault and burglary.[181] Both state and federal courts argue that due to the time needed to try a case and overcrowded conditions of prisons, there is little choice but to let the lesser offenders slip through the judicial

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[180]ibid., p. 64.

[181]Ibid., p. 24.

system. By the same token money laundering, which in many cases involves white collar offenders, has rarely generated the attention it deserves. To combat these inadequacies the Administration has sought to reinforce the criminal justice system with more manpower, allocate more funds to increase the number of beds available in prison, and has introduced legislation making drug offenses more serious in nature. In fact in 1990 the Administration introduced legislation making the death penalty available in areas involving three categories of drug offenders:

- Major Drug Kingpins--those devoted to the large-scale importation or distribution of controlled substances.
- Drug Kingpins who attempt to kill in order to obstruct justice or those who knowingly direct, advise, authorize or assist another in an attempt to kill any public officer, juror, witness or family member of such persons.
- Federal drug felons whose offenses result in death. Those who, intending to cause death or acting with reckless disregard for human life, commit a Federal drug felony resulting in the death of another person.[182]

It becomes readily apparent that such legislation is controversial in the eyes of many Americans and is therefore to be considered a political risk for the Administration to actively pursue such a law. Nonetheless the commitment remains. In addition, the Administration has sought to increase the police search and seizure powers, when narcotics are suspected, and to shorten the time from arrest to trial for such perpetrations. Moves in this direction continue to spark domestic controversy and in part account for

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[182]Ibid., p. 23.

the emphasis on supply side tactics. Supply side strategies are much less controversial among the voters and therefore much easier to pursue.

Drug treatment and rehabilitation is another sensitive area that is an intimate part of the demand category. Although the Administration is seeking $1.5 billion for the nation's drug treatment system, some members see it as a non-player in the drug war. According to the Office of National Drug Control Policy, too few addicts seek treatment voluntarily and of those who do seek treatment, too many reportedly enter and soon drop out of programs without ending their addiction. [183]

Education and community action against drug usage and trafficking is the least controversial component of the demand strategy and perhaps the one demonstrating the most success. This program has been allocated a mere $54 million in additional funds for 1990[184] but less is needed in the long run. Many educators and members of the community have become the cornerstone for this approach to the drug war and with remarkable results. Getting the message across to the young people in the United States requires little capital support but rather a commitment on the part of the community. Education and community action against substance abuse is really the only part of the demand strategy that is clearly in focus.

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[183]Ibid., p. 29

[184]Ibid., p. 39.

4. Assessment

In 1989, $4 billion was allocated to supply objectives and only $1.7 billion to demand objectives. (Figure 2) An evaluation of the fourteen year effort indicated a need for fundamental changes if the United States is truly serious in its quest to win the war on drugs.

The amount of cocaine entering the country between 1984 and 1987 nearly quadrupled while its price went down as much as 40 percent, reaching a low of $80 a gram on the street. The only real achievement of U.S. drug diplomacy has been to increase friction with neighboring nations and to reinforce the stereotype of a heavy-handed Uncle Sam quick to bring his big stick down on Latin America.[185]

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[185]Collett, *Cocaine Connection*, p. 52.

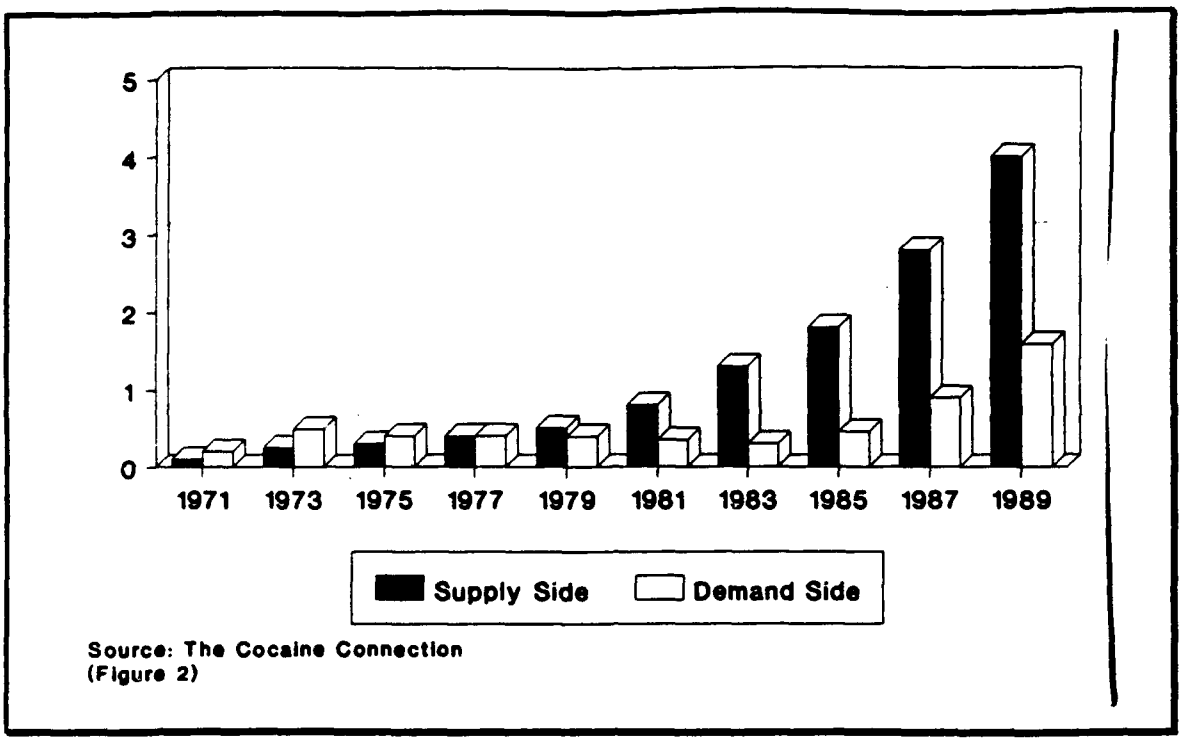

Figure 2. U.S. Federal Drug Control Budget (Fiscal Years 1971-89, in $Billions)

Unfortunately for the United States the image of a "war on drugs" is too simplistic, if it is seen only as a fight between good (law enforcement) and evil (drug traffickers). There is certainly more to the issue than law and order. Current policies highlight the supply side of the equation and in doing so have alienated many of our Latin American neighbors.

In light of the current Middle East Crisis, (late 1990), the United States government has shifted its attention from the "war on drugs" to the "crisis in the Gulf." Consequently, drug trafficking has increased an estimated four percent in the last three months. The governments of Colombia, Bolivia, Peru and Mexico are seen once again questioning the sincerity of the United

States.[186] Granted supply efforts should continue but the United States must increase its drive in two other principle areas. First, we must demonstrate sincerity to Latin America and respect the nations who have already made significant sacrifices in the drug war. This can be accomplished by continuing to meet with Latin American leaders and encouraging a cooperative attitude throughout the region. The United States must be willing to demonstrate reluctance in dictation of policy and agendas. The second area of focus should be on domestic programs, the attention given to the supply side of the formula has been less than fruitful. More attention must be given to education, research, local law enforcement and the overall failure of the judicial system. Unfortunately this area has been largely ignored, primarily because of the difficulty of such a task.

There is light at the end of the tunnel. It would appear that President Bush's proposal for the National Drug strategy has taken into account many of the problems discussed in this chapter. The following areas have received more attention by the Office of National Drug Control Strategy:

- Increase assistance to state and local law enforcement.
- Expand resources for treatment and prevention programs
- Initiate a major anti-drug campaign in the cocaine source countries.
- Establish order in the Nation's public housing projects.
- Build more federal prisons, expand federal and state courts and correctional systems, and add more prosecutors.
- Step up efforts against money laundering operations.

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[186]CNN's "Update on the Drug War," broadcast September 28, 1990.

- Provide sufficient resources to operate and maintain our border interdiction system.
- Expand inter-agency drug traffick force operations.
- Augment drug intelligence capabilities.
- Reduce the amount of marijuana cultivated in American soil.[187]

As guidelines for the 1990 strategy, each area was further broken down and resource allocations were proposed. Perhaps this is the best measure of how rhetorical the above objectives may be.

- State and Local Law Enforcement Assistance

1989	1990
$ 150 million	$ 350 million

- Treatment, Prevention and Research

1989	1990
$ 300 million	$ 399 million

- Department of Education

1989	1990
$ 355 million	$ 392 million

- International

1989	1990
$ 250 million	$ 499 million

- Public Housing

1989	1990
$ 8 million	$ 50 million

- Federal Prosecutors, Courts and Prisons

1989	1990
$ 143 million	$ 183 million

- Money Laundering

1989	1990

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[187]White House, *Strategy*, p. 114.

$ 120 million $ 140 million[188]

The total increase in Federal Budget Allocation for the National Drug Strategy rose from $5.6 billion (FY 1989) to $8.0 billion (FY 1990). This is actually a conservative increase and Congress expected more funds to be requested, however the report in itself demonstrates a far more cohesive and sincere approach than those published in previous years. Money is not the solution, the solution rests firmly upon the United States population and the people of the drug producing countries, and the solutions must include coordination and cooperation.

The Administration argues, in defense of its program agenda, that the effort in supply side tactics must not be judged by resource allocation. International and interdiction objectives are naturally more expensive. Aircraft, surveillance equipment, economic assistance to foreign countries and the manpower needed to be effective, require an enormous amount of fiscal support. However, the amount of dollars requested and the amount spent is not a true reflection of the effort generated to both sides of the equation. Comparison of the two published National Drug Control Strategies does reveal a fundamental move to balancing both approaches and making the efforts more cohesive in their application.

B. THE MILITARY OPTION

One naturally associates the use of the military as an option for fighting the drug war, if for no other reason than the fact that it has been called a

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[188]White House, *Strategy*, p. 115-118.

"war" since Reagan first coined the expression in 1983. However, the Executive branch has been very careful to limit the active participation of the military. The DoD's role is expanding substantially, but their anticipated activities fall short of direct interdiction and confrontation with the narcotrafficking problem. The President and the Office of National Drug Control Policy are aware of the constitutional limitations of using military personnel in civil matters but are currently seeking to expand their role in other supportive ways. As a result of the long Cold War, the United States boasts one of the largest and most sophisticated militaries in the world. In the effort to control narcotrafficking it has become obvious that additional resources, technology, manpower, and coordination are needed. Consequently, the military which has an abundance of the above, has been tasked to act in a *supportive* role in the war on drugs. It should be noted here that small groups of Special Forces have been deployed to Colombia, Peru and Bolivia. However their numbers remain small and they are not authorized to *actively* pursue targeted elements. These units share intelligence, provide training and assist in the coordination of activities by U.S. officials and host country participants. There has been no move by the Administration to expand these operations into an offensive arm of the *National Drug Control Strategy*.

The role of the military has expanded to support interdiction and law enforcement. The DoD has been designated by statute as the lead agency for both maritime and air detection and monitoring. As directed by the Secretary of Defense, all commands have elevated the priority of the drug war and

have submitted suggestive commentaries on how their forces might be better utilized.

Three joint task forces have been established to plan and coordinate detection and monitoring operations and support local interdiction on the Southwest border. State National Guard units are increasingly active in support of interdiction activities as well. From a level of approximately $200 million in Fiscal Year 1988, funding has grown to over $800 million in Fiscal Year 1990; the Department anticipates spending approximately $1.2 billion on drug control efforts--principally in the detection and monitoring phase of interdiction--in Fiscal Year 1991.[189]

The fiscal budget allocated to the DoD for "drug war" activities is substantial and it certainly indicates that the military services will be becoming more involved with the narcotics issue. However, despite rumors generated by the media and by members of Congress, the *National Drug Control Strategy* clearly limits the use of the military. The Administration, the DoD and all agencies involved in the drug strategy are quite aware that the military is to provide a supportive role only.

C. CONGRESSIONAL DRUG CONTROL STRATEGY

1. Congressional Review

Although the Executive Branch has taken the lead on the national anti-drug crusade, the United States Congress has been quick to assume its position in the decision making process. As with any issue however, the

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[189]White House, *Strategy*, p. 71.

viewpoints of Congress are broad and varied, making an analysis of this body's position much more difficult.

In reviewing the basic positions of Congress, it is clear that the final objective is uncontested: narcotics pose a serious threat to society and must be dealt with accordingly. Such a position is not only politically safe but beneficial to political opinions as generated by the constituents. Consequently, in the past seven years Congress has been most active in the coverage of the "drug war." Like some mythological Greek god, the faces of Congress, in terms of the narcotics issue, are many. Some see themselves as the "watchdog" of the Executive Branch and the ONDCP, others promote more activity in demand vice supply issues, and yet another group seeks direct foreign interdiction. Albeit all are critical of the current strategy implemented by the Administration.

The "watchdogs" of the Administration concern themselves with the particulars of the *National Drug Control Strategy* and ensure that all facets of the program remain within the law. For example, the Congressional Committee on Foreign Affairs demanded details on how the $125 million requested aid for Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, was to be controlled and allocated, and for what forms of "aid" it was to be utilized. Indeed in Public Law 101.231, the committee included in the bill a number of safeguards which limited how the funds could be spent and which ensured that Congress was kept fully informed of the use of the funds as plans to implement the strategy

were developed.[190] This body of watchdogs, although supportive of the anti-drugs campaign, are primarily concerned with the legal aspects of drug strategy implementation.

Another group in Congress, personified by the Honorable Fortney Pete Stark of California in the House of Representatives, is critical of supply side tactics and emphasize more attention to demand side issues. The central argument is that law enforcement personnel, health care officials and society as a whole, see the narcotics issue as a domestic problem. According to Stark:

The primary successes in our efforts have been achieved on the demand side of the equation. The enhancement of drug education awareness programs, improvements in drug treatment services, and the expansion of drug prevention programs like law enforcement supplied Project D.A.R.E.. The international drug fighting community has collectively come to realize that the only way to win a war on drugs in the long-term is through better, expanded demand-side solutions.[191]

This group criticizes the Administration for its approaches and sees very little success after seven years of anti-drug effort.

The last major group, albeit a bit more radical, is personified by the Honorable Mr. Burton of Indiana in the House of Representatives.

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[190]Congress, House, *The Andean Package and Associated Issues*, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess., HR 2105. *Congressional Record*, v. 136, no. 58, (8 May 1990).

[191]Congress, House, Congressman Fortney Pete Sark speaking before the House, *The War on Drugs will be Won through Demand Reduction*, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess, *Congressional Record/Extended Remarks*, E1053, (18 April 1990).

Although it agrees on focusing more attention on demand issues, the central argument of this group is the complete eradication of narcotics at the source. This group sees a failure on the part of the Administration as well, but not because of its strategies but rather the lack of effort. Consequently they propose crop eradication through the use of a herbicide known as Tebuthiuron, which kills 95-96 percent of the coca it comes in contact with. According to this committee the herbicide is not harmful to humans or other life forms.

The controversial aspect of this plan stems from the suggested disregard for the national sovereignty of the targeted country.

The idea is that at 6:00 in the morning our President calls the President of Peru or Bolivia-- and he says, `Mr. President, I apologize for waking you at such an early hour, but I want to tell you that we are committed in the United States to winning the war on drugs, and toward that end we have decided the only way to stop the cocaine from entering the United States in large quantities is to eradicate it. So we are flying up and down the Haullaga Valley, starting at this time, and dropping the herbicides in quantities large enough to eradicate that coca leaf'.[192]

Although such a radical suggestion appears out of the question it is interesting that such tactics have been discussed.

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[192]Congress, House, Congressman Burton of Indiana speaking to the House, *Update on the War on Drugs*, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess., *Congressional Record*, H689 (7 March 1990).

Around the three core positions on the drug war there are many sporadic offshoots, those representatives seeking momentary limelight and still others who are critical of every position. However, the Congress is getting more involved in the drug war, as it should, and the drug crisis is receiving attention as an issue of the government not just an issue of politics. Presently the Congress has no real drug strategy or agenda on the drug war, but several acts of legislation have been presented, debated, and enacted, all pointing to the fact that Congress will be an important facet of any strategy.

2 Current Legislation & Military Matters

The *National Drug Control Strategy* serves as a blueprint of sorts for the legislators in Congress. Despite the differences over various particulars, Congress has nonetheless implemented legislative activities to refine the National Strategy. The National Drug and Crime Emergency Act, S. 2245/H.R. 4079 has over 50 cosponsors in the House of Representatives and is designed as an outline for Congressional strategy. It should be noted however, that the plan is general and void of any detail.

The Bill declares a National Emergency for a period of five years during which extraordinary, forceful measures will be used to win the war on drugs and violent crime. The Bill mandates that violent criminals and drug felons serve their full prison sentence. If necessary they will be housed in

temporary facilities, not released into general society free to commit further crimes.[193]

In addition this Bill suggests a program of "zero tolerance" which would be initiated in all public schools and as many business' as possible and finally a drug treatment plan in every state. The Bill is about as generic as possible and avoids discussion of program funding and implementation, but it does demonstrate the first signs of Congressional consensus on the drug war.

In terms of using the military in the drug war, both the Senate and the House have worked to refine the military question without disturbing constitutional law. S2728 and S2910 read respectively as follows:

- S-2728--A bill to amend Title 10, U.S. Code to clarify and expand the authority of the Armed Forces to provide support for civilian law enforcement agencies to the Committee on Armed Services.[194]
- S-2910--An original bill to authorize appropriations of FY91 drug interdiction and counter drug activities of the Department of Defense to allow the Department of Defense to provide additional support to State and Local agencies for such activities, and for other purposes placed on the calendar.[195]

The military issue has been discussed at length in Congress and both houses have gone to great lengths to define the role of the military. At the

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[193]Congress, House, remarks by Congressman Newt Gingrich of Georgia to the House of Representative, *A Strategy for the Drug War*, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess., *Congressional Record.*, E736 (20 March, 1990).

[194]Congress, Senate, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess., S-2728, *Congressional Record*, (13 June 1990).

[195]Congress, Senate, 101st Cong., 2nd Sess., S-2910 *Congressional Record*, (26 July 1990).

present the position of Congress is identical to the Executive Branch: the role of the military will remain supportive only, focusing primarily on detection and monitoring.

Other issues concerning the drug war are being approached in Congress as well, such as the shipment of legal chemicals to drug trafficking countries for use in refinement of narcotic substances. Investigations into these shipments led to the Chemical Diversion and Trafficking Act which went into effect on October 30, 1989.

The role of Congress in the drug war is increasing significantly, but presently consists of minor legislative enactments here and there and an overall refinement of the National Strategy. Whereas Congress will undoubtedly be ever watchful of the Executive strategy and quick to remark on its successes and failures, one should not expect a Congressional plan or strategy. Although Congress agrees on the severity of the drug problem, and the need to get this problem under control, the methods of attack have sparked political controversy. Consequently Congress will avoid conflict with the voting public and continue its assessment and refining of the National Drug Strategy.

VI. THE U.S. MILITARY IN NARCOTICS ENFORCEMENT: RECENT TRENDS

The purpose of this chapter is to examine the historical aspects of U.S. military involvement in the drug wars. One dimension of this involvement has been the initial reluctance of the military to become committed to the war while at the same time being under increasing pressure to do so. An important test case, if on a small scale, was Operation "Blast Furnace." "Blast Furnace" was one of the first instances of the U.S. military becoming actively involved in drug interdiction, and assessing this operation is important in determining potential roles for the military within narcotics source country's. The U.S. Navy also has been called upon to interdict drug shipments, working in conjunction with the Coast Guard, in conducting Law Enforcement Operations (LEO). LEO will also be assessed in reference to cost effectiveness as well as its ability to interdict effectively significant shipments of illicit narcotics. Finally, the use of air assets, the high technology solution to narcotics enforcement, and an extremely important component of the drug strategy will be assesed as to its effectiveness.

A. THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE: A RELUCTANT ACTOR

In April 1986 a directive signed by President Reagan named illicit narcotics as a threat to U.S. national security, and called for the Department of

Defense (DoD) to expand its role into the anti-drug mission.[196] Congress was quick to support former President Reagan's effort for an increased military presence in the drug war, amending legislation which called for additional military funding for National Guard support as well as empowering military personnel to make arrests outside United States territory or waters. In addition Congress called on the President to substantially halt drug smuggling within 45 days of legislation enactment.[197]

This 1988 legislation reflected a Congressional election year response to a growing concern over America's drug problem. America's concern with narcotics was reflected in a series of recent New York Times/CBS poles. In 1985 less than 1 percent of those poled listed drugs as America's most important problem, in September 1989 this figure had risen to 54 percent.[198] In addition, in early 1989, a congressional study team came to the conclusion that the U.S. anti-narcotics effort in Latin America was in chaos. The report stated that the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) was being involved in a paramilitary mission which it was ill-equipped to handle.[199] In

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[196] Grier, P., "Congress, Pentagon Dispute Armed Forces' Role in Drug Fight," *The Christian Science Monitor,* 24 May 1988, p. 24.

[197] Ibid.

[198] "War: 1 Percent; Drugs: 54 Percent," *New York Times,* 28 September 1989, p. A26.

[199] Isikoff, M., "U.S. Troops Urged for Latin Drug War," *Washington Post,* 4 march 1989, p. 4.

responding to requests to 'do something,' increasing the military's involvement seemed the logical answer.

For a variety of reasons the military was initially reluctant to become involved in the drug war. Like the military institutions in Latin America, some members of the U.S. military saw narcotics enforcement as a law enforcement function, not one for the military. The DoD feared that an increased role for the military would take billions of dollars, and divert personnel and weapons away from their primary mission areas.[200] The Pentagon estimated that to shift its mission to drug interdiction and to seal the border in the 45 day time limit would require 90 infantry battalions, 50 helicopter companies, 54,000 army troops, 110 AWACS aircraft, 30 E2C Hawkeye surveillance planes, 50 radar balloons, more than 1,000 fighter aircraft, and 160 naval vessels.[201]

Another factor influencing the Pentagon's reluctance to become involved in the drug war, was the potentially ill-defined nature of the war. Inevitably parallels to the Vietnam War cropped up. Although there are significant differences in comparing Vietnam with the Andean drug war, military personnel had a legitimate concern with the potential rules of engagement that would be needed if they became involved in the drug war. Since peasant coca growers and drug traffickers do not wear uniforms, significant problems occur in just identifying the enemy. Considering that between 200,000 to

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[200]Wilson, G. C., and Moore, M., "Pentagon Warns of a No-Win Mission," *Washington Post*, 13 May 1988, p. 4.

[201]Ibid.

300,000 peasants are directly employed growing or processing coca in each of the 'first tier' Andean nations the problem would be significant indeed.[202]

The military is also aware that the drug cartels present a formidable opposition. The cartels operate with no rules of engagement, of the kind that would restrict United States forces in any conflict. This fact was acknowledged by General Alfred Gray Jr., the Commandant of the Marine Corps. General Gray conceded that the United States risked "winning the battle but losing the war," if it sent troops into the Andean region to battle the coca cartels. In addition General Gray called the drug dealers a "formidable enemy" and predicted that a drug war would be "a long, long campaign."[203]

One last concern addressed by the military was the blurred lines between guerrilla insurgencies and narco-trafficking. In fact in both Colombia and Peru it is almost impossible to separate narcotics control from insurgencies. In Peru the "Shining Path" movement is heavily involved in the narcotics industry, protecting and taxing the coca growers as well as taxing drug traffickers shipments of coca paste. In Colombia the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC), is extremely strong in the coca growing regions and has become increasingly involved in coca paste processing and distribution. Even guerilla groups not involved in the narcotics industry, such as Colombia's Army of National Liberation (ELN), operate in narcotics

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[202]Marshall, J., "In the War on Drugs, Keep the Troops in the Barracks," *the Wall Street Journal*, 27 July 1989, p. A10.

[203]Ryan, R. A., "Use of U.S. Troops in Drug War Questioned," *Detroit News*, 18 August 1989, p. 3.

regions and would come into conflict with any anti-narcotics forces entering their areas of control.

Despite the military's misgiving's about the drug war, the U.S. Army was in fact committed to the conflict, if only on a limited basis, in 1986. This test case for a U.S. military anti-narcotics mission in the Andean region was Bolivia's operation "Blast Furnace." This U.S./Bolivian cooperative effort reflected President Reagan's growing concern that the illicit narcotics industry had become a national security issue.

B. OPERATION BLAST FURNACE

Bolivia's operation "Blast Furnace" came about at the request of former Bolivian President Victor Paz Estenssoro, against the advice of some of his closest advisors. One of the most compelling reasons offered against involving U.S. forces was the importance of the hard currency earned by Bolivia's narcotics industry. This, economic benefit coupled with the militancy and organizational capacity of the Bolivian coca growers union, gave President Paz quite an incentive to resist U.S. overtures to get tough on the narcotics industry. Further economic difficulties existed at the time, arising from an extremely conservative economic austerity program instituted by President Paz. Paz's economic measures had reduced Bolivia's inflation from an annual rate of 23,000 percent to near zero. Bolivia's Planning Minister expressed his opposition to U.S. involvement, at the time,

by stating "running the economic side, when we're fighting bare handed with a tiger, we don't want to take on an alligator."[204]

Despite these factors President Paz did decide to ask for United States assistance. Several reasons may account for the President's decision. First, although the Bolivian traffickers did not present as formidable an opposition as the Colombian cartels did to their government, Paz was concerned about the the growing power of the narcotraffickers. These Bolivian traffickers had helped generate the so called "cocaine coup" of General Garcia Meza in 1980. President Paz also expressed his concern in a Newsweek interview stating "if we do not address this problem (coca) decisively, to eliminate it, the day could come when the economic power they (traffickers) wield could result in their governing the country, including via democratic means.[205] Second, the economic risk confronting Paz would have been limited. The anti-narcotics campaign would be directed against Bolivia's coca processing laboratories, not against the coca growers. Most of Bolivia's coca crop was processed in Colombia not in Bolivia. Also the U.S. presence would only be for a limited time, and the stepped up anti-narcotics campaign would cripple Bolivia's narcotics industry only for that period. Therefore once the operation was over, though Bolivian traffickers may have been effectively dealt with, there

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[204]Graham, B., "Bolivian Barometer: Coca Price Falls," *Washington Post*, 27 July 1986, p. A22.

[205]*Newsweek (International Edition)*, 14 July 1986. Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 361.

would still be a market for coca leaf through Colombian processing facilities, and Bolivian hard currency earnings could soon be restored.

Third, Bolivia was under pressure from the United States to step up its anti-narcotics drive. Bolivia was facing a U.S. Congressional deadline, in accordance with the U.S. Foreign Assistance Act of 1986, that mandated a reduction in U.S. foreign aid unless Bolivia proceeded with an eradication campaign.[206] Given the economic situation President Paz faced he could ill afford to resist U.S. overtures.

Once Bolivia's request for assistance reached the U.S., the Reagan administration decided to commit the DoD to the operation. This was in accordance with a Presidential directive approved on April 8, 1986 permitting the use of U.S. forces in helping other nations to fight narcotics trafficking.[207] The directive was pushed by Vice President Bush who was also instrumental in a successful lobbying effort, overcoming Pentagon misgivings about committing resources to Bolivia.[208]

1. The Military Committed

The Paz government and the DEA sought to keep U.S. military involvement to a minimum, to reduce the Bolivian political outcry which was sure to follow. They envisioned a surgical action using possibly four helicopters and about twenty U.S. Army pilots and crew members, with most

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[206]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 361.

[207]Hoffman, D., "Drug Raid is 1st under Reagan Order," *Washington Post*, 16 July 1986.

[208]Ibid., Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 362.

of the manpower provided by Bolivia's 650 man anti-narcotics police (UMOPAR).[209] When U.S. forces landed in July 1986, the force had grown to six helicopters and 170 personnel.[210]

The United States and Bolivian authorities hoped to keep the operations a secret, at least until the raids started. But on 15 July 1986, only one day after their arrival in Santa Cruz, Bolivia, Bolivian newspapers carried front page reports of the landing of U.S. forces.[211] This attempt at secrecy may have been unrealistic since U.S. forces arrived by a huge C5A cargo plane, an event highly unusual in the town of Santa Cruz.

The main targets of the raids were coca processing laboratories in the main processing regions of Beni, and Santa Cruz. The processing labs had been identified by intelligence gathered by the DEA months previously,. The DEA had been unable to act against these labs due to a lack of Bolivian resources.

The first raids were conducted against labs in the Beni region on July 17, 1986. Problems that were to plague the raids from the outset came to the forefront on these first excursions into the Beni. On the first raid the anti-narcotics forces uncovered a large processing lab in the process of being dismantled. Upon questioning the peasants it was confirmed that the

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[209]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 362.

[210]Lee, R. W., III, *The White Labyrinth: Cocaine and Political Power*, (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 198), p. 71.

[211]Graham, B., "U.S. Army Joins Bolivian Drug Drive," *Washington Post*, 16 July 1986, p. A1.

traffickers had been packing even before the story of the operation had hit the papers.[212] The traffickers own intelligence network within the Bolivian government and anti-narcotics forces was to prove effective in enabling the traffickers to avoid arrest. By the time "Blast Furnace" ended in November 1986 only one arrest was made, that of a seventeen year old boy, who arrived at a laboratory in the process of being destroyed.[213] U.S. officials at the time acknowledged that the high profile traffickers had fled during the first 24 hours of operations. Furthermore U.S. statements indicated that arrests were not the chief intention of the operation and were to be considered a 'side thing'.

In the four months of "Blast Furnace" operations twenty-two cocaine laboratories with a production capacity of fifteen tons of cocaine a year were destroyed. This loss of productive capacity had a profound effect on the price of coca leaf in Bolivia. Within two weeks of the raids commencing, the price of coca fell from 60 to 70 cents per pound to 25 to 30 cents per pound.[214] By the time the raids ended the price for a 100 pound bag of leaf had fallen to

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[212]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 363.

[213]Christian, S., "Bolivia is Hoping U.S. Drug Forces will Extend Stay," *New York Times*, 22 August 1986, p. B4. Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 355.

[214]Graham, "Barometer," p. A1. Though destruction of laboratories was at a minimum at this time, presumably the fall in price was due to traffickers fleeing the processing regions in advance of the anti-narcotics raids.

between $10 to $20, well below the cost of production ($30-$40 per 100 pounds).[215]

As expected the drop in the price of coca leaf had a dramatic effect on Bolivia's rural population and economy. The coca industry employed approximately 400,000 Bolivians and earned $500-600 million per year in hard currency for the Bolivian economy. With coca production falling by about 90 percent after the start of the raids, Bolivia turned to the United States for economic assistance to fill the vacuum.[216] President Paz estimated that Bolivia required an immediate $100 million infusion of U.S. economic assistance to compensate for the losses in coca production and to ensure the success of the anti-narcotics operations.[217] In November 1986 Paz dispatched his Planning Minister, Gonzalo Sanchez de Losada, to Washington to lobby the Reagan administration for the economic aid.

When Bolivia's economic request was made known in August 1986, Reagan administration officials made it known that it could not honor Bolivia's request for the $100 million loan. The Administration apparently did not have $100 million available in foreign aid money at the time.[218] Early in 1987 the Paz administration and the U.S. State Department did agree on a

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[215]Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 72.

[216]McFarren, P., "Drug Raids in Bolivia Hurting Economy," *Washington Post*, 14 November 1986.

[217]Ibid.

[218]Morganthaler, E., "Bolivia Fears an Economic Backlash from U.S. Aided Cocaine Crackdown," *The Wall Street Journal*, 15 August 1986.

plan that fell somewhat short of that originally envisioned by President Paz. This revised plan provided $68 million, if the Bolivian government promised to eradicate all coca grown for export within three years.[219] Given the importance of the coca crop both politically and economically to Bolivia, this alternate plan was almost doomed from the start.[220]

Shortly after the beginning of the "Blast Furnace" raids domestic political pressure began to bear on the Paz government because of the U.S. involvement. On 21 August 1986 the main Bolivian workers federation began a 48 hour general strike to protest the Paz government's economic policies and to demand the removal of the United States troops, stating that the U.S. presence violated Bolivian sovereignty.[221] As many as 20,000 people at a time would participate in the demonstrations organized by the worker federations. The Bolivian left took the opportunity to accuse President Paz of being a tool of American interests. A former president of the Bolivian Senate called the U.S. intervention illegal, and the head of Paz's own MNR (National Revolutionary Movement) Party in Santa Cruz resigned to form a new party and called for the president's impeachment.[222]

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[219]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 362.

[220]In fact in all of 1986 and most of 1987, the Bolivian government eradicated less than 500 acres of coca (Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 365.)

[221]Christian, "Extend Stay," p. A1.

[222]"MNR Leader Scores President, Founds Party," Paris AFP, 31 July 1986. Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 72.

Protests by Bolivia's well organized and often militant coca growers union (ANAPCOCA) were on some occasions able to interfere directly with "Blast Furnace" operations. In the town of Santa Ana De Yacuma an estimated crowd of 3,000 people surrounded and forced a combined Bolivian/U.S. anti-narcotics strike force to abort their mission in the area.[223]

2. Blast Furnace: An Assessmnet

In the short run operation "blast furnace" could be called a technical success. As intended, the operation did disrupt the Bolivian coca industry to the point where the price of leaf fell below the threshold of profitability to the coca grower. The strategy in forcing the price of leaf down was that the peasant coca grower would then be more amenable to switching to an alternate crop, such as citrus fruits, rice or other cash crops.

However one weakness of the "Blast Furnace" strategy was that there was no contingency for filling the economic vacuum once the peasants were in a position to switch from growing coca. This fact was recognized by the Paz Government but was almost totally ignored by the U.S. Government even after the price of coca leaf had fallen dramatically.

As such, within two months of U.S. troops departing Bolivia, the illicit coca industry had bounced back to where a drug intelligence specialist would comment "everything is back to where it was the day we started (pre-blast furnace)." The lack of arrests of the major traffickers (apparently not a major goal of the operation) meant their quick return, and business as usual

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[223]Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 72.

once the pressure was removed. By December 1986 the price of coca leaf had risen to $50 per 100 pound bag, up from the low of $10 per 100 pound bag it had fallen to during "Blast Furnace," and $10 more than the break even point for coca producers.[224] By January 1987 the price of a 100 pound bag had risen to $150 a $25 dollar increase over the pre-"Blast Furnace" price.[225]

Bolivia's return to a reliance on hard currency gained through the narcotics industry was further exacerbated by post-"Blast Furnace" economic conditions. In early 1987 President Paz closed most of the state owned tin mines, (a major Bolivian export and suffering from a depressed world price) throwing about 23,000 miners out of work.[226] The coca fields then acted as a safety valve for the miners with many of them migrating to the major growing areas to find work. Bolivia was further hurt economically by the depressed world price of a second major export, natural gas. Loss of revenues from both of Bolivia's major exports meant that Bolivia was as dependent as ever on the approximately $600 million generated per year in hard currency from the illicit coca industry.[227]

Another shortcoming of "Blast Furnace" was the failure of U.S. planners to assess the internal political dynamics present in Bolivia. The

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[224]Christian, S., "Bolivia Drug Traffick Builds Again as American Troops Withdraw," *New York Times*, 2 December 1986, p. A9.

[225]Simons, M., "Bolivia Cocaine Trade Revives after G.I.s Go," *New York Times*, 3 January 1987, p. 3.

[226]Shannon, *Desperados*, p. 364.

[227]Simons, "Bolivia Bounces," p. 3.

Bolivian labor movement has been extremely strong since Bolivia's 1952 revolution. The coca growing peasants have organized themselves into the National Coca Producers Association (ANAPCOCA).[228] ANAPCOCA receives political support from the 1.3 million strong Bolivian Workers Union and its main affiliate, the Confederation of Bolivian Peasant Workers.[229] This translates to an organizational ability to mobilize 20 percent of Bolivia's population when the need arises.[230] In addition coca farmers are able to glean support from Bolivia's left and far left parties, which have previously controlled up to one-third of Bolivia's legislative Chamber of Deputies.[231]

During "Blast Furnace" this clout put extreme political pressure on the Paz government, with some protests coming from Paz's own MNR party. Bolivian workers were able to organize massive protests against the Paz government, and coca growers in the field were able to intefere actively with "Blast Furnace" operative units. The political influence wielded by those opposed to U.S. involvement in Bolivia was a considerable factor in the U.S. Army units eventual departure.[232]

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[228]Healy, *Coca*, p. 109.

[229]Lee, R., III, "Dimensions of the South American Cocaine Industry," *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, 30 (Summer/Fall), p. 93.

[230]Ibid.

[231]Ibid.

[232]Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 72.

A further shortcoming of "Blast Furnace" was the difficulty of having a permanent impact on the target of choice, the coca paste laboratories. Calling these processing facilities laboratories gives them a greater significance than most of them deserve. Most of the paste labs are of the so called "kitchen sink" types, often only pits dug in the ground, lined with plastic, where the coca leaf is rendered into paste for shipment to Colombia. The labs destroyed during operation "blast furnace" were easily replaced once the pressure was relieved in November 1986. This was reflected in the rapid rise in the price of leaf within two months of cessation of interdiction operations. One final weakness of the operation was the lack of any significant arrests. Though this was not the stated purpose of "Blast Furnace," it meant a quick return to business as usual once the operation was completed. Even if the arrests of traffickers was a major goal of the operation it is doubtful if this aim would have been a realistic one. Given the level of corruption within the Bolivian government and law enforcement institutions, the coca traffickers intelligence network, as demonstrated by traffickers departing the area of operations prior to "Blast Furnace" meant they could effectively counter government efforts at apprehension.

However "Blast Furnace" did show that an up-tempo militarized anti-narcotics campaign could influence the price of coca leaf. The price of coca leaf did fall below the profitability threshold for the coca farmer. But the short duration of the operation, coupled with the lack of a long-range outlook prevented a fully successful outcome in Bolivia.

C. LEO: THE MARTIME PERSPECTIVE

As the amount of drugs entering the United States from Mexico diminished throughout the decade of the 70's, the vacuum was filled by drugs entering from Colombia. Initially the drug of choice being shipped was marijuana, later as America's demand for cocaine grew it overwhelmingly eclipsed marijuana shipments.

The amount of Caribbean narcotics shipments intercepted by the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) increased correspondingly with Colombia's growing importance as an illicit narcotics trans-shipment point. Before 1973 the USCG intercepted and seized only six drug running boats. In 1974 a joint USCG and DEA operation dubbed "Buccaneer" seized seven vessels and ten tons of marijuana. Between 1973 and 1978 the number of vessels seized by the USCG had risen to 189, carrying 250 tons of marijuana.[233]

The amount of vessel seizures not only indicated that the USCG was becoming more proficient at intercepting the drug smuggling boats, but the number of boats transporting illicit narcotics had also shown a dramatic rise. Through the 1980's it has been estimated that the number of vessels shipping narcotics had risen to over 18,000 per year.[234] Having to cover the 1,664,500 square miles of the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean, the number of vessels

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[233]Trainor, J. C., "Coping with Drug Runners at Sea," *Naval War College Review*, (December, 1989).

[234]ABC, "World News Sunday," 3 September 189, "Military's Role in War on Drugs," Peter Collins and David Ensor, narrators.

transporting narcotics was clearly surpassing the capabilities of the USCG to intercept them effectively.

The recognition by the Reagan Administration that illicit narcotics had become a U.S. national security issue, and that the U.S. military was an asset to be used against this threat meant the U.S. Navy was called upon to assist the USCG in intercepting narcotics vessels. The Defense Authorization Act of 1982 allowed USCG personnel to ride navy ships and exercise law enforcement authority from those ships.[235] These joint U.S. Navy/USCG operations became known as Law Enforcement Operations (LEO), with a USCG Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) assigned to the naval vessels participating.

The LEDET's would usually consist of one USCG officer and four to six men. The detachments are utilized as boarding teams. When a suspect ship was identified, the USCG pennant is run up on the naval ship before attempts at boarding the suspect vessel are made by the LEDET.

Like her sister services, the Navy was reluctant to be cast into a law enforcement role. The Navy felt that these operations would draw ships away from their primary mission areas, and would expend resources that could be used more effectively elsewhere. Backers of Navy involvement argued that drug interdiction sea patrols could be substituted for training exercises. The Navy countered with the argument that a drug interdiction role required skills that were not compatible with normal mission

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[235]Trainor, "Coping."

requirements, and that it was not possible to foresee drug interdiction as enhancing naval readiness or training.[236] Despite this reluctance, pressure by the Administration slowly drew the Navy into the drug war.

The number of naval ship days dedicated to LEO has steadily increased throughout the 1980's. In 1983 there were zero ship patrol days dedicated to LEO.[237] By 1987 the number of patrol days had increased to 2,325 days with 178 navy ships involved.[238] Thereafter the Navy has kept its LEO patrol days at around the 2000 day level.[239] The Pentagon revealed that it hopes to expand LEO when it revealed its 2 year, $2 billion anti-narcotics package in March 1990.[240]

Ships utilized in LEO run the gamut from destroyers to logistics ships. The naval patrol hydrofoils are probably the most effective ships involved in anti-drug maritime operations. The six Pegasus class hydrofoils belong to Patrol Combat Missile Squadron #2, operating out of Key West, Florida. The patrol hydrofoils are on call to any law enforcement agency that requests their

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[236]Carrington, T., "Senate Votes to Use Military in War on Drugs: But Tactics Remain Formidable," *The Wall Street Journal*, 16 May 1988, p. 46.

[237]Longo, J., "Tempers Rise during Face-Off over Initiatives," *Army Times*, 23 May 1988, p. 1.

[238]Schwerzler, N. J., "Congress Seeking Larger Role for Pentagon in Election-Year Drug Campaign," *Baltimore Sun*, 22 May 1988, p. 18.

[239]Diaz, C. L., "DoD Plays in the Drug War," *Naval Institute Proceedings*, (Naval Review, 1990), p. 78.

[240]Moore, M., "Pentagon Announces $2 Billion Anti-Drug Plan," *Washington Post*, 10 March 1990, p. A12.

services from Joint Task Force #4 (JTF4). The hydrofoils have been increasingly called into service by law enforcement. Since being utilized in anti-narcotics operations, (from 1985 to mid-1989), they have accounted for 30 percent of the Navy's overall drug busts, despite operating with only 6 platforms.[241]

Since implementation, LEO has shown some positive results in the war on drugs. From 1984 through March 1988 LEO was responsible for seizing 39 vessels. Those vessels were carrying 450,000 pounds of marijuana and 1,890 pounds of cocaine. In addition LEO produced 198 arrests.[242]

1. Maritime Interdiction: An Assessment

Use of the Navy in assisting the USCG has brought in a needed asset as the USCG was being overwhelmed by the influx of illicit narcotics entering the United States. But several problems and criticisms have cropped up with LEO that have made the maritime anti-narcotics strategy less effective than it might be.

One shortcoming of the program are the restrictive rules of engagement that the naval vessels must operate under in international waters. In international waters boarding procedures of suspect vessels fall under National Security Council Order #27 and Presidential Directive #27 (NSC-27/PD-27).[243] If a suspect vessel is encountered NSC-27/PD-27 requires

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[241]Thomas, V. C., "Terrors on Patrol," *Sea Power* (May 1990).

[242]Schwerzler, "Congress Seeking," p. 18.

[243]Trainor, "Coping."

that the intercepting vessel contact the U.S. State Department at the U.S. embassy in the Flag State, the embassy will then contact the Flag State and request permission to board the suspect vessel. If permission is granted by the Flag State and the suspect vessel refuses to stop the PD-27 procedures are repeated to obtain permission to fire warning shots and disabling fire.[244]

Needless to say such procedures are time consuming and give the suspect vessel time to escape or dump its cargo. In President Bush's 1990 Drug Control Strategy the goal is to expand the USCG Shiprider program. This program allows for source/transshipment country law enforcement personnel of each country to accompany one another on ships to conduct operations in and around the territorial seas of their countries.[245] Expansion of such a program could possibly increase the efficiency of maritime interdiction outside the territorial waters of the United States.

Another issue in the Navy's involvement in maritime drug interdiction, is the question of cost effectiveness. A 1987 Government Accounting Office (GAO) report addressed the question of cost, utilizing the LEO program. The GAO determined that the Navy spent $27 million and the USCG spent $13 million under the LEDET program. 1987 LEDET operations resulted in the seizure of 20 boats carrying 225,000 pounds of marijuana, 550 pounds of cocaine, and yielded 110 arrests.[246] This amounted to a cost of $2

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[244]Ibid.

[245]White House, *Strategy*, p. 68.

[246]Moore, M., "Pentagon Almost a Bust in Drug War," *Washington Post*, 3 June 198, p. A17.

million per seizure. The large cost associated with these anti-narcotics operations led the GAO to reach an ambiguous conclusion as to the value of DoD in the war on narcotics.[247] The report stated that there was no agreement among experts that increased federal interdiction efforts, with or without increasing levels of DoD assistance, will significantly reduce the amount of drugs entering the United States.[248]

The use of U.S. Naval forces has also become a foreign policy issue for the United States. This has been a relatively recent concern since the use of U.S. Naval assets are strictly under U.S. control and was not a serious concern of the drug producing nations. The benign use of U.S. Naval forces in drug interdiction was in for a rude awakening with the U.S. attempt to station a naval battle group off the coast of Colombia in January 1990. The plan called for the stationing of an aircraft carrier battle group off the coast of Colombia to monitor all sea and air traffic, and was conceived prior to President Bush's 1990 drug summit in Cartegena, Colombia. On 5 January 1990 the carrier USS John F. Kennedy battle group departed Norfolk, Virginia for the Caribbean.[249]

The problem with the plan might have been that United States intentions were poorly articulated to the Colombian government. Although

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[247]Ibid.

[248]Ibid. General Accounting Officer (GAO) (1988b) "Drug Control: Issues Surrounding Increased Use of the Military in Drug Interdiction (GAO/WSIAD0880156), Washington: GAO.

[249]Trainor, B. E., "Colombians Balk at Crucial Part of U.S. Drug Plans," *New York Times*, 7 January 1990, p. 1.

the Bush Administration denied that the stationing of the carrier battle group off the Colombian coast was intended as a blockade, it seems many Colombian's saw it that way. The issue for many Colombians quickly became one of "American intimidation" and a question of sovereignty regarding the United States. The resulting political furor caused the Bush Administration to shelve its plan, and the Kennedy battle group was never deployed off of Colombia. By the Cartegena summit on 15 February 1990, Colombian attitudes had still not wavered. When queried about a change in attitude regarding such a mission former Colombian President Viriglio Barco stated "Colombian territorial waters are being patrolled by us and controlled by us."[250]

Despite some cumbersome Rules of Engagement (ROE) and questions of cost, there have been positive aspects to the LEO program. First, the increased tempo of maritime operations provided by U.S. Navy support has forced the narco-traffickers to re-think their routing procedures. The Caribbean and the Gulf of Mexico is no longer quite as easy a transit route. As maritime interdiction pressure has increased the U.S./Mexican border has increasingly become the transit point of choice. Second, use of Naval forces is also relatively free of foreign policy restrictions, despite the Colombian outcry over the deployment of the USS Kennedy battle group. With maritime forces under singular United States control and operating in U.S. and International waters, the United States need not be concerned with the variety of foreign

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[250]Rosenthal, A., "3 Andean Leaders and Bush Pledge Drug Cooperation," *New York Times*, 16 February 1990, p. A1.

domestic political anxieties that have plagued the use of U.S. resources within the "first tier" narcotic nations.

D. AIR INTERDICTION: THE HIGH TECHNOLOGY RESPONSE

With the effort to gain increased military support for the war on drugs, it was realized by 1986 that air coverage along the United States Southern border was severely inadequate. With an estimated 18,000 illegal flights entering the United States each year, and with drug smugglers increasingly operating sophisticated long-range aircraft, the inadequate resources of U.S. civilian law enforcement agencies were being taxed beyond their capabilities.[251]

Proposals were made to utilize Aerostat radars, helium filled balloons equipped with a powerful radar, along the United States southern border, and to equip civilian agencies with more sophisticated aircraft assets. But the main push was to bring in the U.S. Air Force, with her formidable surveillance assets, into the anti-narcotics air interdiction mission.

The initial Air Force surveillance effort was centered around the E-3A Advanced Warning And Control Systems (AWACS) aircraft. The E-3A, a radome equipped Boeing 707, has a surveillance radius of over 250 miles. During fiscal year 1987 the Air Force flew 4,000 hours of drug related surveillance flights, passing information about suspicious aircraft to law enforcement agencies.[252] By March 1990, the amount of AWACS flight time

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[251]Dillin, J., "Congress Drafts Military to Battle Drug Traffickers," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 march 1989, p. 1. "Drug War Goes Airborne," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 23 May 1986, p. 1.

[252]Schwerzler, "Congress Seeking," p. 18.

in support of counter drug operations had increased significantly. Forty percent of AWACS operations worldwide are now devoted to anti-narcotics operations and away from its primary mission as an air war command center.[253]

By the end of 1989 the air force anti-narcotics mission area was expanded. The North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) was called in to assist in stemming the flow of narcotics into the United States. NORAD created its own intelligence center, but initially would only intercept planes when U.S. Customs aircraft were not available.[254] An initial weakness found in utilizing NORAD's 47 radar sites was that aircraft could not be detected flying under 2,000 feet.[255] With most drug smuggling aircraft flying below this altitude NORAD had only a limited input against the war on drugs. To compensate for this NORAD is installing an Over The Horizon Back Scatter Radar (OTH-B).[256] This radar system bounces radio waves off the upper atmosphere and back down to earth. OTH-B will give NORAD the capability to detect aircraft up to a distance of 2,000 miles away, an increase of over 1,700

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[253]Gordon, M. R., "U.S. is Stepping up Efforts to Seize Cargoes of Drugs," *New York Times*, 10 March 1990, p. 1.

[254]"Drug War," *Air Force Times*, 25 December 1989.

[255]Balman, S, Jr., "In Drug War the Weapon of Choice is Radar," *Air Force Times*, 18 June 1990.

[256]The U.S. Navy is also developing a land-based over-the-horizon radar system dubbed ROTHR, which could be used in an anti-narcotics role. (Diaz, "DoD Plays," p. 83.)

miles over NORAD's other radar systems, and at altitudes down to ground level.[257]

Another asset utilized by the U.S. Customs Service, with Air Force assistance, was the network of Aerostat balloons. The balloons are tethered at an altitude of 10,000 to 12,000 feet, and are equipped with radar. They have a range of 200 miles, and are capable of detecting low flying aircraft.[258] The balloons are currently deployed in the Florida Keys, Grand Bahamas Islands, Denig, New Mexico, Fort Huachuca and Yuma Arizona, with plans to station an additional thirteen balloons in the Caribbean, and along the United States border.[259]

The increased use of satellites by the Pentagon, and other Federal agencies is probably the ultimate use in technology in the war on narcotics. The satellites are used to spy on clandestine airstrips as well as roads and laboratories used by the narcotics traffickers. In addition, civilian and military satellites are being used to locate remote areas under drug crop cultivation, and are being planned for the task of tracking drug smuggling aircraft and

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[257]Ibid.

[258]Balman, "Weapon of Choice."

[259]Ibid.

ships.[260] The DEA has considered the use of satellites for reconnaissance and intelligence gathering as an important tool in the war on drugs.[261]

1. Air Interdiction: An Assessment

As with the Navy, the use of high technology Air Force assets has called into question the cost effectiveness of such operations. One AWACS cost $10,000 an hour to operate. Although the Aerostats cost only $500 an hour to operate they cost $12 to $15 million each and $5 million annually to maintain.[262] In a 1987 GAO study it was found that the Air Force spent $433,000 per seizure.[263] The Aerostats have also been accused of being too fragile with a down time of 50 percent.[264] The use of satellites has also come under some foreign criticism. In March 1990 Mexico protested the use of a U.S. satellite to observe drug cultivation without Mexico's knowledge.

The main difficulty of air interdiction is the fluidity of the task. Unlike ships which can be stopped and searched, aircraft can only be caught once they are on the ground. This requires a high degree of coordination, often between several agencies and cutting across international borders.

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[260]Broad, W., "Charting Drug Trade from the Skies," *New York Times*, 14 October 1989, p. 6.

[261]Ibid.

[262]Balman, "Weapon of Choice." Schwerzler, "Larger Role," p. 18.

[263]Moore, "Pentagon Almost," p. A17.

[264]Weiner, E., "Loss of Balloons Hinders Drug Vigil," *New York Times*, 9 February, p. 12.

An incident which occurred in March 1989 illustrates the point. In this case an Air Force AWACS detected a low flying aircraft off the East Coast of the United States. NORAD launched two F-16 fighters to intercept, the F-16's tracked the aircraft until they ran low on fuel after which NORAD dispatched two additional F-16's. With no powers of arrest the Air Force handed the mission over to the Customs Service operating an aircraft near the Canadian border. The drug smuggling aircraft landed in Canada and before permission could be obtained to pursue, the narcotics had already been unloaded and sent on its way.[265]

Despite questions of cost and shortcomings with coordination, the air interdiction campaign in conjunction with the maritime campaign, have forced drug smugglers to rethink their strategy. It is now estimated that up to 70 percent of the cocaine entering the United States comes through Mexico, as against 30 percent a few years ago.[266]

Similar to Naval assets, air interdiction generally does not suffer from the political constraints inherent in the use of forces within narcotic source country borders. Under U.S. control, air assets can generally be deployed as the United States deems necessary.

Coordination problems are correctable and have been targeted in the White House *National Drug Control Strategy*. Nevertheless part of the shortcomings associated with the use of these high technology systems is that

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[265]Fialka, J. J., "The Military Enters the War on Drugs, and Find Elusive Foe," *The Wall Street Journal*, 31 August 1989, p. A11.

[266]Weiner, "Loss of Balloons," p. 12.

the equipment and the men who operate it were designed and trained for an entirely different mission. As the coordination problems are corrected and as personnel become more proficient operating in the new environment, the number of successful interdictions should rise and the costs per seizure decrease.

VII. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to examine closely the dynamics of the Latin American narcotics trade and to identify the role for the United States military, if any, in the interdiction of illicit narcotics. Determining the role for the U.S. military lends itself to two levels of analysis, 1) Use of U.S. forces within the territory of narcotic source and transshipment nations, and 2) Use of U.S. assets outside the territorial limits of the "first tier" narcotics countries.

Since operation "Blast Furnace" the use of U.S. military assets within the source countrries has been extremely limited. This is not to say that there are no U.S. military personnel working within the "first tier" nations, but rather that they have kept a low profile, mainly working within an advisory capacity.

Currently there are U.S. military advisors present and conducting training missions in Colombia, Peru, and Bolivia, all coordinated by the U.S. Southern Command. U.S. Marines are leading Colombian troops on anti-narcotics patrols, U.S. Army Special Forces are based in Mazamari, Peru undertaking training patrols, and within Bolivia training anti-narcotics police.[267] The critical question is whether the United States should seek to

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[267]Jehl, D., "GI's Escalate Attack on Drugs in South America," *Los Angeles Times*, 2 July 1990.

expand the role of "in country" military anti-narcotics assets by pressuring the "first tier" nations to accept them.

One thing that must be realized is that the anti-narcotics mission, even under the best of circumstances, is an extremely difficult one. The domestic constraints currently existing within the "first tier" nations make their mission nearly impossible. Each of these constraints will now be examined in turn.

A. ECONOMIC CONSTRAINTS

Given the difficulty of the problem of illicit narcotics within the Andean region, it is vital that U.S. forces receive full cooperation from the nations within which they would be operating. Considering the dire economic conditions that exist within two of the Andean nations (Peru, and Bolivia), it is not clear these country's would render full cooperation if the U.S. military anti-narcotics role were expanded.

Both Bolivia and Peru rely on hard currency generated by the narcotics industry to the detriment of their legitimate economies. The coca fields in Bolivia and Peru have also acted as an economic safety valve for the unemployed when their jobs were eliminated by depressed world prices for legal exports. The narcotics industry has thus then been able to co-opt a large pool of potential social discontent.

The importance of the coca economies is manifested in the foreign policy relations between the "first tier" nations and the United States. The Andean political leaders are extremely sensitive to the linkage of increasing U.S. economic support to their accepting U.S. efforts at increasing anti-narcotics enforcement. This was manifested by former Bolivian President Paz

Estensorro seeking U.S. economic support during operation "Blast Furnace." It was also apparent in Peru when former President Alan Garcia and current President Alberto Fujimori rejected $35 million in U.S. military aid and the training of six Peruvian battalions in counter-insurgency for assignment to the upper-Huallaga Valley, without it being linked to increased U.S. economic aid to compensate for the loss in coca revenues upon which the campasinos depend.

Even Colombia, the strongest economically of the "first tier" countries is sensitive to the effects of the narcotics industry on its economy. Restrictions on U.S. import of Colombian flowers may not be seen as a serious issue in the United States, but in Colombia, a nation bearing the brunt of narco inspired terrorism, it is seen as a major foreign policy issue as the nation tries to wean itself away from coca.

Without a major economic plan in conjunction with a militarized interdiction strategy, it is doubtful that any "first tier" nation will give its full cooperation to United States forces. Without that full cooperation it is doubtful that any military strategy will have any long-lasting effects in the war on drugs.

B. POLITICAL CONSTRAINTS

Leaders and former leaders in all three "first tier" nations at one time or another have made statements concerning the detrimental effects that the narcotics industry has on their societies.[268] At the same time these leaders

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[268]Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 194.

acknowledge how important the cocaine industry has been to the revitalization of their countries.[269]

The narcotics issue has thrown the political leadership into the jaws of a domestic political dilemma in regards to the narcotics industry. On one hand the desire to rid their nations of the cocaine trade and all the negative connotations that it entails, and on the other the fact that the narcotics industry has created some powerful domestic constituencies that cannot be ignored. In addition the questions of sovereignty and U.S. imperialism are constantly waiting just under the political surface any time the issue of increased U.S. military involvement in narcotics interdiction is raised.

One reason that Andean politicians have not pursued the narcotics problem to U.S. satisfaction is the lack of consensus in these countries that the drug problem is as serious as the United States claims. This position is reflected not only among political circles, but among the general populace as well. The Andean region tends to see the problem as being driven by U.S. demand not Andean supply. The Latin governments tend to be more concerned about domestic issues such as unemployment, widespread poverty, lack of housing, and availability of healthcare, rather than the narcotics issue.[270] This lack of concern in the general populace is then manifested by an ambivalence on the part of political institutions. Like many politicians major

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[269]Ibid., p. 195.

[270]Lee, *Labyrinth*, p. 194. "Urban Colombians Favor International Cooperation Against Drugs, but Reject Extradition and Fear Herbicides," *USIA Research Memorandum*, Washington, DC, 22 February 1988, p. 3.

interests rest with those issues that concern their constituents, and there is a tendency to not be overtly active in narcotics problems.

The narcotics industry and threat of U.S. interference in anti-narcotics enforcement has also created some powerful political lobbys. These lobbys cannot be ignored by Andean political leaders.

In Bolivia this is illustrated by powerful labor organizations, including the coca growers union. In numerous instances these organizations, have actively interfered with anti-narcotics operations. On more than one occasion Bolivian leaders have had to bend over backwards in order to placate aroused Bolivian labor. This was amply demonstrated during U.S. involvement in operation "Blast Furnace."

Restrictions on Peruvian leadership not only include a politically powerful left, but the most serious leftist insurgent group in Latin America in the "Sendero Luminoso" movement. These political restrictions have made Peruvian political leadership extremely sensitive to any U.S. overtures of aid or military assistance. This sensitivity was demonstrated by former President Garcia switching positions agreed upon at the Cartegena Drug Summit in February 1990. The political outcry over an increased U.S. presence for the training of Peruvian troops forced Garcia to reject the plan. His position has since been endorsed by his successor President Alberto Fujimori.

Finally all three "first tier" countries are extremely sensitive to what they perceive as U.S. "imperialism," and threats to their sovereignty. This sensitivity has produced various degrees of reluctance in conducting anti-narcotics operations or in accepting U.S support.

The Andean countries are extremely uncomfortable with U.S. military intervention, both past and present, even when it has not directly affected them. The U.S. invasion of Panama in December 1989 provides a case in point. The invasion was roundly criticized by Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. As a result of the invasion Peru suspended all anti-narcotics operations, and former President Garcia suspended his plans to attend the Cartegena Drug Summit. Although Garcia later recanted on both counts, the invasion did demonstrate Andean sensitivities to the issue. The question of U.S. interference has also been particularly relevant to Colombia, as was amply displayed by the U.S. battle group incident in January 1990. Despite United States assurances that a blockade was not intended, Colombian perceptions quickly turned the issue to one of sovereignty,with Colombian outcry forcing President Bush to shelve the plan.

C. ESCALATION CONSTRAINTS

One criticism of an increased U.S. military presence in the "first tier" nations in order to interdict narcotics is the potential for U.S. forces to be drawn into conflicts of an ill defined nature. This potential is made apparant by the presence of leftist insurgency groups, particularly in Peru and Colombia, many of which operate in coca growing and processing regions.

In Peru the "Sendero Luminoso" movement is undoubtedly the most well organized insurgency group in Latin America. Sendero is solidly entrenched in Peru's major coca growing region, the upper-Huallaga Valley. Peru's military has heretofore been unsuccessful in defeating this movement, and their prospects in doing so in the future is extremely doubtful. There are

now reports that U.S. Army Special Forces advisors have conducted patrols into Sendero country.[271]

In Colombia two insurgency groups are of particular concern, one with strong ties to the narcotics industry, the other not, but still operating in narcotics areas. The first is the FARC. As stated earlier in this thesis FARC has become extensively involved in Colombia's cocaine industry, graduating from protecting cartel processing laboratories to actual participation in coca growing and paste production. The other Colombian insurgency group still active is the pro-Castro Army of National Liberation (ELN). Though smaller than FARC, ELN has been extremely active, particularly against Colombia's oil industry. ELN has already attacked Venezuelan National Guard troops undertaking anti-narcotics missions across from Colombia's major marijuana growing regions in the north-east and would surely be encountered if U.S. troops were committed to the region.

The presence of these insurgencies, and the fine line drawn between them and narcotics industry, would make narcotics interdiction extremely difficult without U.S. forces becoming involved in counter-insurgency. While there is evidence of United States domestic support for the U.S. Armed Forces in a drug interdiction role, it is doubtful that support could be maintained if U.S. forces became involved with countering leftist inspired insurgencies.

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[271]Jehl, "GI's Escalate."

D. GEOGRAPHICAL CONSTRAINTS

One problem that must be addressed on the subject of increased United States involvement in narcotics interdiction is: Where do we draw the line in sending military support? The drug cartels generally are not restricted by geographic boundaries, but any U.S. forces would be. Already countries such as Ecuador, Argentina, Venezuela, and Chile are experiencing increased instances of narcotics trafficking. But the country which could potentially fill any vacuum brought about by increased anti-narcotics enforcement in "first tier" countries is, Brazil. Brazil has the capability to fulfill all the aspects of narcotics trafficking, from growing coca, to processing, to transshipment.[272]

Brazil has 9,100 miles of land borders, much of it with Colombia, Bolivia, and Peru, all of it rugged terrain and hard to effectively patrol. Brazil has a well developed chemical industry capable of providing precursor chemicals, such as acetone, for processing coca into cocaine hydrochloride.[273] To underscore Brazil's growing importance to drug traffickers, in 1981 approximately 200 pounds of cocaine were seized in Brazil, this increased to 2,000 pounds in all of 1987, and further to 2,000 pounds in just the first six months of 1988.[274] Recently Brazilian authorities seized over half a ton of

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[272]The domestic Brazilian version of the coca plant is known as "epadu" and can be grown profusely in the Amazon region.

[273]Riding, A., "Brazil now a vital Crossroad for Latin Cocaine Traffickers," *New York Times*, 28 August 1988, pp. 1 and 18.

[274]Ibid., p. 1.

cocaine on a single raid in Sao Paulo, Colombia's Cali cartel was thought to be behind this particular shipment.[1]

Therefore it will be difficult to limit the interdiction strategy to the "first tier" nations. The Latin drug trade almost always follows the path of least resistance. If the United States is to seriously considering sending troops to the Andes to fight the drug wars, it must realize that the drug war is unlikely to be limited to the geographic boundaries of the "first tier" nations.

All of these constraints make an "in country" U.S. military solution a dubious undertaking. In addition, plans such as that outlined by General Maxwell Thurman, former commander of the United States Southern Command, would seem to fall far short of bringing ultimate success. General Thurman's proposed plan entails a lightning strike to simultaneously take out the drug infrastructure in Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru. The plan would rely on Andean military resources aided by U.S. intelligence.[2] Such a strike would seem of doubtful merit given the limited military capabilities of the Andean countries. Moreover, as was seen with operation "Blast Furnace," the narco-intelligence network is often much more effective than the anti-narcotics forces.

If a major U.S. military response seems an uncertain proposition in providing a decisive outcome in the Andean Region, what then should be

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[1]"Brazilian Police Seize Half-Ton of Cocaine," *San Jose Mercury News*, 4 November 1990, p. 23A.

[2]Waller, D., et al., "Ricky Business," *Newsweek*, 16 July 1990, p. 16.

the U.S. Military response, if any, within the "first tier" narcotic source nations?

As stated earlier there already is a U.S. special operations presence in the Andes. Thirty percent of U.S. military personnel located in the Andean region are of a "special forces" nature but carry a wide array of job qualifications ranging from construction (as in roads and bridges) to medical and combat training analysts.[277] These U.S. missions are small and so far seem to be politically palatable to the "first tier" governments. Although political flare-ups do arise occasionally to this U.S. presence, it falls far short of that exhibited during "Blast Furnace," or the stationing of the USS Kennedy battle group off the coast of Colombia.

If a U.S. advisory capacity is needed in the Andes, this also implies that there is a role for the "first tier" military institution in the Latin drug wars. Though the U.S. should encourage the maximum use of civilian law enforcement in battling narcotics, in some instances the "first tier" nations are faced with a "fait accompli" in regards to involving their military institutions. Though there are political pitfalls in the U.S. encouraging a Latin military response to the narcotics problem, on a case by case basis it can be encouraged.

In Colombia the military is already extensively involved in the drug war. It is hard to see how this could be avoided. Colombia's police forces were

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[277]Interview with Dr. Anthony W. Gray Jr., Deputy Director Inter-American Region, Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense, conducted on November 30, 1990 at the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School.

clearly being overwhelmed by narco-terrorism, and do not have the capabilities to challenge guerilla groups within the coca growing and processing regions. Though there have been problems of corruption and tolerance of paramilitary groups by the Colombian military, the military has also provided some significant successes. The Colombian government has also taken the military to task when positive results have not been provided, going so far as firing senior military commanders.

Peru is another case in which the local military may have to become involved in drug interdiction. "Sendero's presence in the upper-Huallaga Valley has rendered attempts by law enforcement at eradication and interdiction relatively ineffective. Peru's government and military institution have both been resistent to the notion of militarizing their narcotics problem. But the realization that Sendero draws much of its support from the financing it receives from narco-dollars may yet force the Peruvian government to involve the army. There are definite pitfalls in involving the Peruvian military, but Peru is rapidly approaching a situation of "in extremis" in regards to the situation.

Unlike Colombia, and Peru, Bolivia is not plagued by a narco-terrorist mafia or a serious insurgency movement. Thus Bolivia does not represent such a clear cut case for domestic military involvement in anti-narcotics operations. Operation "Blast Furnace" was conducted primarily by Bolivian law enforcement units with U.S. logistical support and was ultimately successful in forcing down the price of leaf, as indicated earlier. But, it is unclear whether civilian law enforcement could sustain such an operation again without more significant help from the Bolivian Military. What

remains clear is that the Bolivian government has not shown any inclination at duplicating the results of "Blast Furnace," possibly finding the decision too difficult politically, though the military has recently been more receptive to a drug enforcement role.

Even with no Latin military involvement in the Andes it is still necessary for the U.S. to maintain advisory missions in the region. Given the paramilitary nature of the anti-narcotics operations in the region, the civilian law enforcement institutions require some level of military training to effectively carry out their mission. This is necessary just to maintain the status quo in the region, in trying to keep some type of control on narcotics production and trafficking. By encouraging an increased interdiction role by the "first tier" nations it makes efforts by assets directly under U.S. control much more effective.

If the U.S. military role within the "first tier" countries, should remain limited, what then should be the mission of the other U.S. military assets currently conducting counter narcotics operations? It is the contention of this thesis that military assets directly under U.S. control should be the primary means utilized in conducting counter-narcotics interdiction missions.

Having direct control of naval and air assets is itself a positive aspect. From a foreign policy standpoint, concern with sensitive Andean opinions on the use of such forces is much less complex. Occasionally mistakes do occur such as with the Kennedy battlegroup, or with the use of satellite surveillance with Mexico, but for the most part these concerns are minor and can be smoothed over with a minimum of damage control. In emphasizing use of U.S. military forces outside of the Andean region the United States

does not have to be concerned with the almost byzantine restrictions that have plagued our interdiction efforts within Latin America to date.

This is not to say that emphasizing a maritime and air interdiction strategy is not without its problems. But these problems are manageable, and could make our strategy much more effective.

The question of cost effectiveness is a legitimate one, but one that should become less of a factor as time progresses. Adapting equipment and personnel to a different mission, is not an easy task. U.S. Military equipment and training is generally geared towards dealing with a high-tech fast moving adversary, and this is usually just the opposite with narcotics enforcement. The results of GAO studies have indicated that military assets have been too expensive for the results shown. But what the GAO did not emphasize was that there could be a learning curve associated with U.S. forces involved in drug interdiction. As these forces move up the learning curve their efficiency in conducting successful anti-narcotics missions should rise correspondingly, with a significant drop in cost.

A critical area that could make military interdiction much more effective is in the area of intelligence. Senate reports have indicated that there are serious shortcomings in intelligence gathering and sharing among the variety of agencies tasked with drug enforcement, including DoD. Part of this is caused by confidentiality and sensitivity of sources. Many military intelligence gathering assets are classified, and there is a reluctance to share this information due to its nature. Federal agencies utilize confidential

informants for much of their intelligence and for bureaucratic reasons there is a reluctance to share this information with other agencies.[278]

The President's *National Drug Control Strategy* has identified intelligence gathering and coordination as a vital area of concern. The administration has provided for the creation of a National Drug Intelligence Center (NDIC) to improve this area of our interdiction strategy. The effective dissemination of timely intelligence can only make U.S. military interdiction efforts that much more effective.

Regardless of military involvement, whether by U.S. or Latin military institutions, it is not the single solution to United States consumption or Andean production problems. The United States must proceed with a viable education and treatment strategy, and the Andean region must get its economic house in order for any type of strategy to be effective . Reduction in demand and supply must proceed in conjunction with each other, this is the only way for interdiction to make a dent in the shipment of narcotics.

Economically it will be difficult for the Andean region to go it alone. Bolivia, Colombia, and Peru rely on the United States for both markets and economic aid. With Colombia's relatively healthy economy it is more a question of the United States guarding against policy decisions that adversely affect the Colombian economy. Often American decisions are made with little foresight as to how it will effect Colombia's war against the cartels. Bolivia and Peru are more in need of direct economic aid. Their economies

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[278]Ostrow, R., "Senate Report Cites U.S. Intelligence Gaps on Colombian Drug Cartels," *Los Angeles Times*, 12 September 1989., 12 September 1989.

are both in dire straits, and consequently rely on narco-dollars to offset the imbalance in hard currency earnings. But if the United States does step up economic aid to both of these countries it must guard against throwing good money after bad. The same errors made by these countries being mired in their economic difficulties cannot be repeated.

The question of the United States placing increased emphasis on education and treatment is a vital one. It will be virtually impossible for the United States to win the war on drugs without significantly reducing demand. But this strategy is not one for the short term. It is one for changing a value system currently existing in the United States, and by its very nature will take a significant period of time. Some advocate completely abandoning interdiction in favor of devoting assets strictly to education and treatment. This could be a serious mistake, strictly emphasizing a long-term solution could be just as fallacious as only devoting assets to interdiction. The potential could exist for the U.S. market to be saturated with cheap narcotics, overwhelming the best efforts at education and treatment. Interdiction has an important role to play in eventually winning the war on drugs, and the United States military is a significant asset that must be utilized in that war.

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